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EXCLUSIVE 5-PAGE PREVIEW OF..
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WHAT THE--?!
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SALICRUP'S SECTION

The results are in! At long last all of the 1988 MARVEL AGE Summer Annuals Report Card grades have been tabulated by **Goofy Glenn Herdling** and are here for all to see! We ran the blank report card back in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #65, and asked all of you to grade the many chapters of THE EVOLUTIONARY WAR. The response was sensational, and we'd like to thank everyone who took the time to vote! Remember, the numbers below represent the percentage of the many Marvel maniacs, not to mention Zombies, who voted. That means if there's a 2 in the Awful column, a whopping two percent of the voters thought that annual was. . .well, awful. So what are you waiting for? Check out the results below and see who made the grade!

1988 MARVEL AGE SUMMER ANNUALS REPORT CARD	OUTSTANDING	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	AWFUL
X-FACTOR ANNUAL #3	23	53	20	2	2
PUNISHER ANNUAL #1	34	32	20	10	4
SILVER SURFER ANNUAL #1	29	37	20	10	4
THE NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL #4	31	31	30	6	2
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #22	23	31	27	13	6
FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL #21	22	44	22	8	4
X-MEN ANNUAL #12	64	27	6	1	2
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #4	12	29	35	8	16
WEST COAST AVENGERS ANNUAL #3	17	31	33	13	6
SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #8	27	27	30	12	4
AVENGERS ANNUAL #17	65	23	8	4	0

So there you have it! The wages of war revealed! The clear victor was X-MEN ANNUAL #12, (**Chris**, **Art**, and all concerned should get medals!) while the loser was WEB OF SPIIDER-MAN #4 (If you ask me, they should take the editor of that annual out and have him shot!). Missing in action was the ALF ANNUAL that made a surprise attack on the newsstands last summer—so surprising that we didn't know about it in time to include it in our Report Card.

Overall, last year's Evolutionary War Annuals were well received and set sensational new sales records! Glad I thought of connecting all the Marvel annuals (Well, I did!)

Be here next month for the 1989 MARVEL AGE ANNUALS Report Card and to find out all about ATLANTIS ATTACKS!

Class dismissed! School's out!

—Jim Salicrup

MARVEL AGENDA

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MARVEL® COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here's a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic, New Universe, and Marvel U.K. titles shipping in March.

Titles Shipping March 9
On Sale March 28

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA** #355—**Cap** vs. the **Taskmaster** Part II. To defeat the **Taskmaster** once and for all, what terrible price must **Captain America** pay? Written by **Mark Gruenwald,** and penciled by **Kieron Dwyer,** and inked by **Al Milgrom.** 75¢.

☐ **DAREDEVIL** #268—**Matt Murdoch** claims **Daredevil** is dead. But then he witnesses the terrifying grip a mob loan shark operation has over an upstate New York town.

Can he turn his back on the trouble? And if he can't, how can he clean up the town without becoming **Daredevil**? Written by **Ann Nocenti**, penciled by **John Romita Jr.**, and inked by **Al Williamson**. 75¢.

☐ **SEMPER FI'** #8—Two tales of the Marine Corps!

To please his father, **David Gimble** became a Marine. To please himself, he's doing it *his* way. That's put him on a collision course with the system. And in the conclusion of this special two-part tale, you discover which side wins! "Motivated with Pride" is written by **Michael P. Palladino**, and drawn by **John Severin**.

In 1779, **Michael Whittier** learns that sometimes the deadliest enemy is one wearing the uniform of a Continental Marine! "Battle for Bagaduce" is written by **Michael P. Palladino** and drawn by **Sam Glanzman**. 75¢.

☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS** #46—**The Great Lakes Avengers?!** Who the heck are they? That's what **Hawkeye** and **Mockingbird** plan to find out. Wait'll you see the fireworks that happen when they meet! Written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Mike Machlan**. 75¢.

☐ **WOLFPACK Limited Series** #12—It's he final issue—and it's a battle-filled blockbuster! **Wolfpack** attacks the **Nine** itself! How can a street gang from the Bronx hope to defeat an evil organization that possesses billions of dollars and controls the fate of millions of people? The answer'll astonish you! Written by **John Figueroa**, penciled by **Ron Wilson**, and inked by **Christopher Ivy**. 75¢.

☐ **WHAT THE--?!** #5—The outrageous satire series is back!

Writer **Peter B. Gillis**, penciler **Eric Larsen**, and inker **Al Gordon** poke fun at the **Hulk**. Writer **Walt Jaschek** and artist **Jim Lee** do a wacky send-up of super hero teams.

Writer **Peter B. Gillis** and artist **Whilce Portacio** undo the legend of **Thor**. Writer/artist **Hilary Barta** depicts true mayhem unleashed when **Wolverean** squares off against the **Pulverizer**! Writer **Terry Austin** hosts an outrageous super hero game show. And, because you demanded it, more goofy ad parodies! 48 pages. $1.50.

☐ **G.I. JOE EUROPEAN MISSIONS** #10—Talk about your international incident—the **Dreadnoks** are running riot in Europe! If the **Joes** don't stop them fast, they could start World War III! Written by **Dan Abnett** and drawn by **Robin Smith**. A Marvel U.K. comic. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.75.

☐ **EXCALIBUR** #10—At last, **Widget** joins **Excalibur!** And it's not a moment too soon because **Excalibur** is locked in a final showdown with the Nazi **Excalibur** from another dimension! Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Alan Davis**, and inked by **Paul Neary**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK** #3—**She-Hulk** literally loses her head this issue thanks to **Mysterio, the Headmen** and. . .**Spider-Man**? "My Guest Star, My Enemy!" is written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS** #23—The biweekly anthology series continues with four new stories!

CYCLOPS Part VII: **Conscience** and **Cyclops** are supposed to be allies now. But will **Conscious** betray **Cyclops** to **Master Mold**? Written by **Bob Harras**, penciled by **Ron Lim**, and inked by **Bruce Patterson**.

BLACK PANTHER Part XI: The **Black Panther** is trapped! And things are about to get worse! Written by **Don McGregor**, penciled by **Gene Colan**, and inked by **Tom Palmer**.

Plus complete in this issue: The **Falcon** takes on the cruelest drug dealer in Harlem! Written by **Fabian Nicieza** and drawn by **Dave Cockrum**.

When **Wolfpack's Wheels** falls in love with the ex-girlfriend of a street punk, he also falls into a ton of trouble. The street punk won't give up the girl—especially not to a cripple! Written by **John Figueroa**, penciled by **Ron Wilson**, and inked by **Tex Blaisdell**. 32 pages. $1.25.

☐ **CONAN THE KING** #53—**King Conan's** split with his son, **Taurus**, could spell disaster for **Conan's** kingdom! Part one of a searing two-part tale in which **Conan** risks the loss of everything and everyone he loves! Written by **Jim Owsley** and drawn by **Geof Isherwood**. Plus: **Conn**, the crown prince of Aquilonia, receives the ultimate humiliation at the hands of the man he hates most, his father **King Conan**! Written by **Adam Blaustein**, penciled by **Dale Eaglesham**, and inked by **Pat Redding**. 48 pages. $1.50.

☐ **STRIKEFORCE: MORITURI** #31—The dramatic conclusion of the regular series! The coup to overthrow Earth's government is launched! The outlawed **Morituri** make the ultimate last stand in the defense of humanity! Written by **James D. Hudnall**, penciled by **Mark Bagley**, and inked by **Carlos Garzón**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

SUPER-VILLAIN™ CHECKLIST

Annihilus: THOR #405
Aron the Watcher: FANTASTIC FOUR #328
Arranger: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #152
Baron Mordo: DOCTOR STRANGE #5
Bushman: MOON KNIGHT #2
Chameleon: WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #52
Cloetie: THE INCREDIBLE HULK #357
Conscience: MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #23 and #24
Cult of the Living Pharoah: MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #24
High Evolutionary: WHAT IF ? #1
Kree: SILVER SURFEER #25
Lava Men: THE AVENGERS #305
Lobo Brothers: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #152
Master Mold: MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #23 and #24, THE UNCANNY X-MEN #246
Mephisto: DOCTOR STRANGE #5
Mysterio: THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK #3
Doctor Octopus: MARVEL TALES #235, THE SPIDER-MAN Graphic Novel
Dragon Man: FANTASTIC FOUR #328
English Trolls: X-FACTOR #42
Excalibur: EXCALIBUR #10
Frightful Four: FANTASTIC FOUR #328
Galactus: WHAT IF ? #1
Glorian: THE INCREDIBLE HULK #357
Headmen: THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK #3
Hellfire Club: CLASSIC X-MEN #35
Nimrod: THE UNCANNY X-MEN #246
Sabertooth: WOLVERINE #9
Salamish: DOCTOR STRANGE #5
Skrulls: SILVER SURFER #25
Sorcerer: ALPHA FLIGHT #72
Super-Skrull: SILVER SURFER #25
Taskmaster: CAPTAIN AMERICA #355
Tombstone: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #152
Venom: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #317
Zola, Arnim: MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #24

☐ **G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS** #23—The team gets a new **Joe, Scoop.** But **Stalker, Tunnel Rat, Hit 'n' Run, Muskrat,** and **Leatherneck** don't think **Scoop** has what it takes to be a **Joe.** Are they right? They—and you —will find out when that team is ordered to rid Sierra Gordo of the **Iron Grenadiers!** Written by **Larry Hama,** penciled by **Herb Trimpe,** and inked by **Andy Mushynsky.** $1.00.

☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN** #52 — You know **J. Jonah Jameson** as an irascible, hard-charging publisher. Now that he is a prisoner of the **Chameleon,** find out what made him the man he is in a special peek into his past — meet reporter **J. Jonah Jameson.** Written by **Gerry Conway,** guest penciled by **Frank Springer,** and guest-inked by **John Romita Sr.**. $1.00.

Titles Shipping March 16 On Sale April 4

☐ **SOLO AVENGERS** #20—Two tales of Avenging action!

Hawkeye is trapped in a plant kingdom house of horrors thanks to the murder-minded **Plant Man!** Guest starring the **Orb.** Written by **Howard Mackie,** penciled by **Ron Wilson,** and inked by **Don Heck.**

Moondragon has a new body for her soul. Now that she's truly back on Earth, will she try to help or destroy the planet? And what role in her decision do the awesome **Stardragon** and **Sundragon** play? Written by **Peter B. Gillis,** penciled by **James Brock,** and inked by **Roy Richardson.** 75¢.

☐ **ALF** #17—**Alf** uses his Wetif machine to peek into the future. And what he discovers about the **Tanners** has his hair standing on end in "Melmac to the Future." Written by **Michael Gallagher,** penciled by **Dave Manak,** and inked by **Marie Severin.** $1.00.

☐ **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #317—**Venom's** back! And this time he's going to attack **Spidey** where he's most vulnerable — at **Aunt May's** house! Written by **David Michelinie** and drawn by **Todd McFarlane.** $1.00.

☐ **THE MARVEL UNIVERSE HANDBOOK UPDATE Limited Series** #1—The acclaimed fact-filled reference series of the heroes, villains, hardware, and houses in the Marvel Universe returns! From the **Adversary** to **Devil Dinosaur,** see what's new in the lives of your favorites! New penciled art by **Ron Frenz, Mark Silvestri, Rick Leonardi, John Romita Jr., Alan Davis, Todd McFarlane, Walt Simonson, Jackson Guice, Jim Lee, Kieron Dwyer, Bret Blevins,** and more. Inked by **Joe Rubinstein.** 48 pages. $1.50

☐ **MOONSHADOW** Trade Paperback—Know someone who *still* thinks comics are kid stuff? Then show him this! The critically acclaimed limited series about a young man's discovery of life is not only finally collected into one massive volume, but it also features a new cover and a *new* ending! Written by **J. Marc DeMatteis** and illustrated by **John J Muth.** An Epic Trade Paperback. 392 pages. Direct sales only. For mature readers only. $18.95.

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT** #72—**Talisman** can kill the evil creation called **the Sorcerer.** So why does she hold back? Because the only way for her to stop him from conquering Earth is to let **the Sorcerer** slay the rest of **Alpha Flight!** "End Game" is written by **James D. Hudnall** and drawn by **Gerry Talaoc.** 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **GROO THE WANDERER** #53—The Odd Couple of the Barbarian Age, **Groo** and **Chakaul** (and Groo's loyal dog, **Rufferto,** of course), embark on their greatest—or should we say, most disastrous adventure! Written and drawn by Sergio Aragonés and salaamed by **Mark Evanier.** An Epic comic. $1.00.

☐ **THE 'NAM MAGAZINE** #12—Re-presenting from THE 'NAM #s 23 and 24 the tales of Christmas in Vietnam and the opening round of the Tet Offensive. "Blue Christmas" and "Beginning of the End" are written by **Doug Murray,** penciled by **Wayne Vansant,** and inked by **Geof Isherwood.**

Plus: a special gallery feature presenting never before published art from THE 'NAM. A Marvel black and white magazine. 48 pages. $2.00

new universe™

☐ **THE WAR Limited Series** #2—The unthinkable happens! World War III is declared! Written by **Doug Murray** and drawn by **Tom Morgan**. 48 pages. Hudson paper. A New Universe Graphic Album. Direct sales only. $3.50.

☐ **HEATHCLIFF** #35—The classic tale of "The Prince and the Pauper" is uproariously retold with **Heathcliff** as the pauper who switches places with a bored cat prince. What happens next is pure cat-astrophe! "The Prince and the Pawper" is written by **Angelo Decesare**, penciled by **Warren Kremer**, and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. $1.00.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS** #77—**Mirage** is dying from a mysterious space-born illness. **The New Mutants** must find **Dr. Strange**, the only man who can save her, before the **Valkyrie** takes **Mirage** to Valhalla! Written by **Louise Simonson** and penciled by **Rich Buckler**. $1.00.

☐ **POWER LINE** #7—The **Power Line** kids are tired of being manipulated. But their quest to find the person who's been using them is about to reach a terrifying dead end! Written by **D.G. Chichester** and **Margaret Clark** and drawn by **Gray Morrow**. An Epic Comic. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **POWER PACK** #47—**Katie Power** accidentally falls into the strange dimension where **Power Pack's** costumes originated. It's a fantasy realm that's filled with fun—and fatal consequences! Written and penciled by **Jon Bogdanove** and inked by **Hilary Barta**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **WOLVERINE** #9—**Wolverine** vs. **Sabertooth**! "Hunter's Moon Redux" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **John Buscema**, and inked by **Al Williamson**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** #161—It's a tale of eldritch horror and savage action! **Conan** embarks on a rescue mission to save an innocent woman trapped in the soul-chilling Land of the Dead! "Call of the Howling Shadows" is written by **Chuck Dixon**, penciled by **Gary Kwapisz**, and inked by **Mark Pacella**. A Marvel black and white magazine. 64 pages. $2.50.

Titles Shipping March 23 On Sale April 11

☐ **DAMAGE CONTROL Limited Series** #3—A new set of uniforms and a new sales scheme threaten to destroy the whole **Damage Control** operation—and **Iron Man**! Written by **Dwayne McDuffie**, penciled by **Ernie Colón**, and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. 32 pages. $1.00.

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK** #357—The **Hulk's** really in trouble this time! **Clootie's** raised a demon and ordered him to slay the **Hulk**! And even if the **Hulk** should beat the demon, he's going to discover his victory will be an empty one — thanks to **Glorian**! Written by **Peter David** and penciled by **Jeff Purves**. 75¢.

☐ **MARVEL TALES** #225—Re-presenting from AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #90, the heart-wrenching death of **Captain Stacy** by the vengeance-driven **Dr. Octopus**! Written by **Stan Lee**, penciled by **Gil Kane**, and inked by **John Romita Sr.** New cover by **Todd McFarlane**. 75¢.

☐ **MUPPET BABIES** #26—The **Muppet Babies** shoot the moon in a wild aventure into outer space that's a mixture of drawings and photographs. Written by **Laura Hitchcock** and drawn by **Marie Severin**. $1.00

☐ **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #76—It's our annual Summer Fun issue! Get the inside story on the 1989 annuals, the **Spider-Man** Graphic Novel, the **King Kull** Graphic Novel, **Wolverine's** appearance in the ALF SPRING SPECIAL. Plus: A 5-page preview of THE NTH MAN! Not only that, but there's also **Stan's** Soapbox, **Mark's** Remarks, **Hembeck's** Page, Marvel Trivia Quiz, and all our other regular features! Direct sales only. 50¢.

☐ **THE PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL** #7—It's the brutal conclusion of the two-part saga! The **Punisher** is convinced **Wolverine** is a poacher. **Wolverine** doesn't care what the **Punisher** thinks. He's only concerned about one thing, teaching the **Punisher** a lesson that he'll never forget. . .provided he survives! "Endangered Species" is written by **Carl Potts** and drawn by **Jim Lee**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN** #220—**Larry Hama** guest-scripts a macabre tale of high-seas piracy, death, and justice. The twist ending will cause you to agree that this is one of the most memorable **Conan** tales of the year! "Drum Song" is penciled by **Gary Kwapisz**. $1.00.

☐ **G.I. JOE** #88—The **Joes Scarlett, Hawk,** and **Snake-Eyes** confront for the first—and unfortunately not the last—time the fearsome **Cobra Python Patrol** and discover the horrible Cobra secret of pythonization! "Python Patrol" is written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **Tony Salmons**, and inked by **Randy Emberlin**. $1.00.

☐ **THE PUNISHER** #21—The new art team of penciler **Erik Larsen** and inker **Scott Williams** premiers! Their first issue is a tense saga of cynical manipulation and callous betrayal. The **Punisher** uncovers a crooked boxing promoter's scheme to bank a million bucks for himself—by wrecking the career and the life of the boxer who trusts him. The **Punisher** knows what he must do, he's prepared for every contingency—except interference by the boxer's girlfriend! Written by **Mike Baron**. $1.00.

☐ **THE UNCANNY X-MEN** #246—**Nimrod** becomes possessed by **Master Mold**! The **X-Men** barely defeated him the first time—how are they going to win now? "Nimrod" is the first of a gritty two-part saga written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Mark Silvestri**, and inked by **Dave Hunt**. $1.00.

☐ **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS** #24—Four new stories every two weeks!

CYCLOPS Part VIII: The awesome conclusion! **Cyclops, Moira MacTaggert, Banshee** and **Callisto** launch the final battle to save mankind from extinction as **Master Mold** releases the Retribution Virus! Written by **Bob Harras**, penciled by **Ron Lim**, and inked by **Bruce Patterson**

THE BLACK PANTHER Part XII: Only one person **Zanti Chikane**, can save the **Black Panther** now. The question is, will he? Written by **Don McGregor**, penciled by **Gene Colan** and inked by **Tom Palmer**.

HAVOK Part I: **Havok** steps to help a woman with a broken down car—and suddenly finds himself having to save her body *and* soul from the sinister **Cult of the Living Pharaoh**! Written by **Howard Mackie**, penciled by **Rich Buckler**, and inked by **Bob McLeod**.

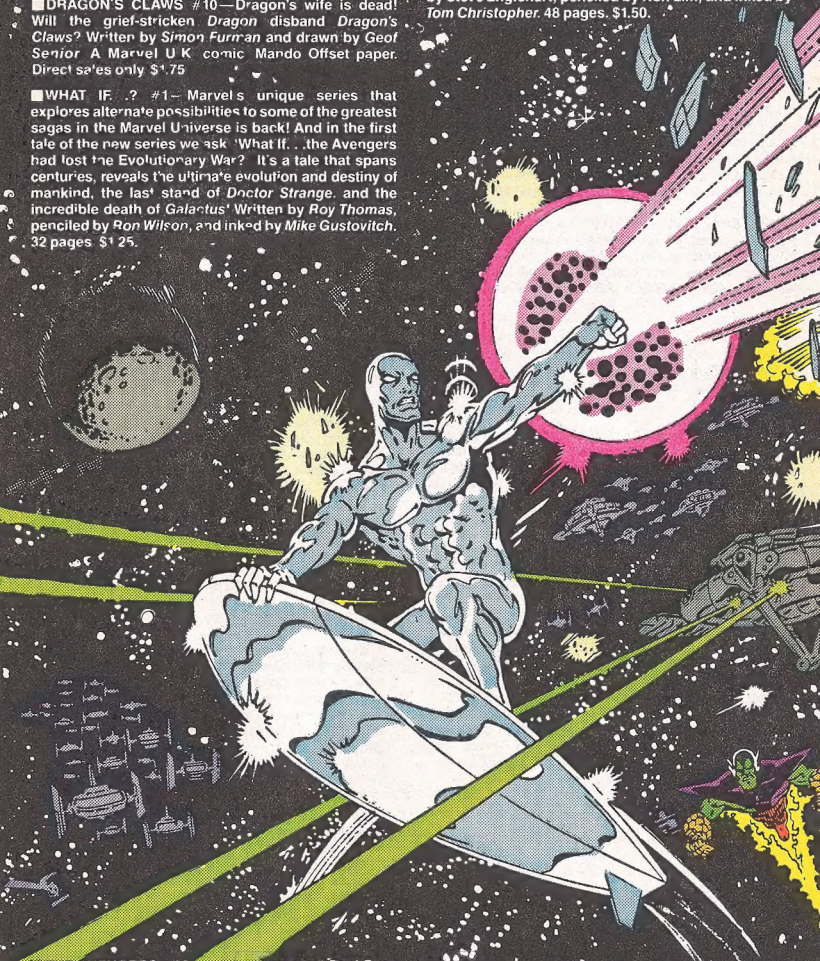
Plus complete in this issue: **Shamrock** accidentally discovers the lab of the mad geneticist, **Arnim Zola**, just in time—because he needs a mutant guinea pig for his latest experiment! Written by **Scott Lobdell**, penciled by **Dennis Jensen**, and inked by **Dan Adkins**. 32 pages. $1.25.

■DEATH'S HEAD #5. *DEATH's Head* is a bounty hunter with a wacky sense of humor. But this time *Death's Head* fares an outlaw who has a foolproof way of stopping *Death's Head's* jokes. . . permanently! A Marvel U.K. comic. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.75

■DRAGON'S CLAWS #10—Dragon's wife is dead! Will the grief-stricken *Dragon* disband *Dragon's Claws*? Written by *Simon Furman* and drawn by *Geof Senior*. A Marvel U.K. comic. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.75

■WHAT IF. . .? #1—Marvel's unique series that explores alternate possibilities to some of the greatest sagas in the Marvel Universe is back! And in the first tale of the new series we ask 'What If. . .the Avengers had lost the Evolutionary War? It's a tale that spans centuries, reveals the ultimate evolution and destiny of mankind, the last stand of *Doctor Strange*, and the incredible death of *Galactus*! Written by *Roy Thomas*, penciled by *Ron Wilson*, and inked by *Mike Gustovitch*. 32 pages. $1.25.

■THE SILVER SURFER #25—The *Kree/Skrull War erupts! The Surfer* is duped into choosing sides and thus imperils the existence of his home world of Zenn-La! As if that weren't enough, the *Skrulls* have created a totally new *Super-Skrull*! It's a giant-sized galaxy-spanning saga that will leave you speechless! Written by *Steve Englehart*, penciled by *Ron Lim*, and inked by *Tom Christopher*. 48 pages. $1.50.



□THE AVENGERS #39—*John Byrne* and *Paul Ryan* debut as the new regular writer and penciler! *Captain America* sends out the call—all *Avengers* must assemble at Avengers Island for a special announcement! But the moment every Avenger is there, that is the moment when the *Lava Men* launch a surprise attack! Inked by *Tom Palmer*. $1.00.

■THE SAGA OF THE SUB-MARINER Limited Series #9—It's mutant against mutant when the *Sub-Mariner* attacks the uncanny *X-Men*! Written by *Roy* and *Dann Thomas*, penciled by *Rich Buckler*, and inked by *Bob McLeod*. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

Titles Shipping March 30 On Sale April 18

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR** #328—An all too-mortal **Ben Grimm** must save the imprisoned **Fantastic Four** from **Aron**, the rogue **Watcher**, **Dragon Man**, and the **Frightful Four**! Written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Keith Pollard**, and inked by **Romeo Tanghal**. 75¢.

☐ **IRON MAN** #244—It's a special giant-sized saga that launches an all-new direction for **Iron Man**! A crippled **Tony Stark** refuses to quit being **Iron Man**. But before he can again become the armored **Avenger** he must design a totally new armor technology! When **Tony Stark** is through there'll not only be new armor, there'll also be a new purpose for **Iron Man**! Co-plotted and scripted by **David Michelinie** and co-plotted and drawn by **Bob Layton**. $1.50.

☐ **SPEEDBALL** #11—Everyone wants to be in **Pulitzer Patty's** high school video—everyone except the janitor. When the murder-minded janitor kidnaps her for capturing his image with her camcorder, it's **Speedball** to the rescue! Written by **Fabian Nicieza** and penciled by **Steve Ditko**. 75¢.

☐ **THOR** #405—Asgard is drifting more and more into the Negative Zone. To save it from certain doom, **Balder** must defeat the Zone's ruler. . .**Annihilus**! Written by **Tom DeFalco**, penciled by **Ron Frenz**, and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. 75¢.

☐ **COUNT DUCKULA** #5—**Count Duckula** finally finds a way to achieve his fondest desire—to become a movie star! Plus: **Danger Mouse** embarks on a real tail-curling adventure in a special back-up tale. Written by **Michael Gallagher** and drawn by **Warren Kremer**. $1.00.

☐ **DINO-RIDERS** #5—The civil war in the **Dino-Riders'** ranks gets worse! And the evil **Rulons** assemble for the final blow that will destroy the **Dino-Riders**! Written by **George Caragonne**, penciled by **Kelley Jones**, and inked by **Danny Bulanadi**. $1.00.

☐ **THE SPIDER-MAN Graphic Novel**—When exactly did **Mary Jane Watson** discover that Peter Parker was **Spider-Man**? This and many more questions about their relationship are answered in a special story that recounts the lives of **Peter Parker** and **Mary Jane** and how they grew to love each other. And just in case you're wondering where **Spider-Man** is in this soap opera, he's battling **Dr. Octopus**! Written by **Gerry Conway**, penciled by **Alex Saviuk**, and inked by **Andy Mushynsky**. Cover painting by **Bob Larkin**. 64 pages. Direct sales only. $8.95.

A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.

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☐ **THE TRANSFORMERS** #54—The **Autobots** get new allies, the amazing man-sized **Micromasters**! And just in time, too, because they've got to stop the **Decepticons** from destroying New York City! Written by **Bob Budiansky**, penciled by **José Delbo**, and inked by **Danny Bulanadi**. $1.00.

☐ **X-FACTOR** #42—Will **Alchemy** stay with the **English Trolls**, join **X-Factor**, or will he go off on his own? It's a choice that could spell the difference between global economic stability—or worldwide currency chaos! Written by **Louise Simonson**, guest-penciled by **Art Adams**, and inked by **Al Milgrom**. $1.00.

☐ **CLASSIC X-MEN** #35—Re-presenting from THE UNCANNY X-MEN #129, the first chapter in the acclaimed **Dark Phoenix** saga. "God Spare the Child. . ." Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **John Byrne**, and inked by **Terry Austin**. Plus: an unusual back-up tale about **Phoenix's** disturbing transformation written by **Ann Nocenti** and drawn by **John Bolton**. 32 pages. $1.25.

☐ **DOCTOR STRANGE** #5—Writer **Roy Thomas**, penciler **Jackson Guice**, and inker **Jose Marzan** debut as the new creative team! **Baron Mordo** sought power, that's why he sold his soul to both **Mephisto** and **Satannish**! Now both demon lords have come to collect and only **Doctor Strange** can save the man who is his most bitter enemy. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **MOON KNIGHT** #2—The **Bushman** has captured the woman **Moon Knight** loves. To keep **Marlene** from suffering a fate worse than death in **Bushman's** Freedomtown, **Moon Knight** must get help from **Spider-Man**! Written by **Chuck Dixon**, penciled by **Sal Valluto**, and inked by **Mark Farmer**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **THE 'NAM** #32—You know what has been going on in Vietnam during 1968. Now see how the Vietnam war almost tore apart America in "Land of the Free." Written by **Doug Murray**, penciled by **Wayne Vansant**, and inked by **Geof Isherwood**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **CONAN SAGA** #26—Re-presenting from SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #11 the gripping adaptation of a chilling tale by **Conan** creator **Robert E. Howard**, "Abode of the Damned." Scripted by **Roy Thomas** and drawn by **John Buscema**. Plus from SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #8, "Sorcerers' Summit" written and drawn by **Bruce Jones**. 64 pages. A Marvel black and white magazine. For mature readers. $2.00.

☐ **AKIRA** #10—At last—**Akira**! Violence rocks the secret government project as rebels **Kaneda** and **Kay** as well as the Colonel's soldiers make a last ditch effort to stop **Tetsuo** from reaching the suspended animation chamber that houses the mysterious **Akira**. "The Awakening" is written and drawn by **Katsuhiro Otomo**, English language adaptation by **Jo Duffy**, and computer coloring by **Steve Oliff**. An Epic comic Graphic Album. 64 pages. Direct sales only. $3.50.

☐ **GROO CHRONICLES Limited Series** #1—The early classic tales of **Groo** re-presented! Including revised art and story! If you thought you knew everything about the klutziness of **Groo**, wait'll you see these tales! Written and drawn by **Sergio Aragonés**, and admired by **Mark Evanier**, with new coloring by **Tom Luth**. An Epic Graphic Album. 48 pages. Direct sales only. $3.50.

☐ **THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN** #152—Spider-Man discovers the incredible origin of the mutant werewolves, the **Lobo** brothers! Does that secret provide the key he needs in his desperate attempt to stop the gang war they're waging against the **Kingpin**? Plus: **Robbie Robertson** does everything he can to avoid **Tombstone.** Trouble is in prison, there's no place to hide! Written by **Gerry Conway** and drawn by **Sal Buscema**. $1.00.

☐ **ALF SPRING SPECIAL** #1—**Alf** and **Wolverine** team up for an adventure you have to see to believe! Written by **Michael Gallagher**, penciled by **Dave Manak**, and inked by **Marie Severin**. 64 pages. $1.75.

THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE UNIVERSE®

Face it, folks, it's getting so that everywhere you look in the Marvel Universe these days, there's a mutant. You might wonder, is there a way to keep track of all the new characters who keep popping up in Marvel's many mutant books? Is there one place where you can find all the information there is to know so far about these characters, or, for that matter, all the rest of the seemingly innumerable characters in the Marvel Universe?

Well, there is. This year sees the publication of a six-issue UPDATE series for THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE. The UPDATE covers all the characters introduced in the Marvel Universe, mutants and non-mutants alike, over the last three years, and there are a lot more than you'd think. The previous version of the HANDBOOK, of course, which features biographies of all the veteran Marvel characters, is still available in trade paperback editions at comics specialty stores across the country.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE asked one of its regular writers, **Peter Sanderson**, to interview the author of the UPDATE, Marvel's resident researcher Peter Sanderson. Both Sandersons had trouble fitting the interview into their busy schedules, but finally Sanderson I cornered Sanderson II, pinned him to the floor with a complete set of heavy bound volumes of THE FANTASTIC FOUR, and shoved a tape recorder in his face, and the following interview commenced.

How many characters from Marvel's mutant books are profiled in the new UPDATE series?

We cover so many mutants and other characters from X-MEN, X-FACTOR, and related series that they could easily fill a whole issue or two of the UPDATE by themselves. There's **Psylocke**, for example, who is **Captain Britain**'s sister and one of the newest members of the **X-Men**. The **Angel** gets a revamped entry covering his brand new persona of **Archangel.**

We also have **X-Factor**'s leading adversary, **Apocalypse**, and his **Horsemen**, **War**, and **Famine**, as well as **Infectia**. The X-Men's Australian ally, **Gateway**, shows up, and **Lila Cheney**, the mutant rock singer from THE NEW MUTANTS, and the **New Mutants**' alien companion, **Gosamyr.**

As for **Excalibur**, not only does the team itself get an entry, but so do many of its members. Captain Britain gets a vastly expanded entry covering his entire history, most of which has appeared in comics published in Britain by Marvel U.K. Other entries will spotlight Excalibur members, **Meggan** and **Widget**, as well as the Captain's adversaries, the **Crazy Gang**, the **Technet**, and the **Vixen**, his patroness, **Roma**, and the mysterious **Saturnyne**.

There are all the villains from "Inferno," including **N'astirh**, **S'ym**, **Mister Sinister**, and all of the individual members of the Marauders, as well as the Adversary from "The Fall of the Mutants" storyline. Villains from THE NEW MUTANTS, the **Ani-Mator** and **Spyder**, get dealt with as well as members of the **Alliance of Evil** from X-FACTOR.

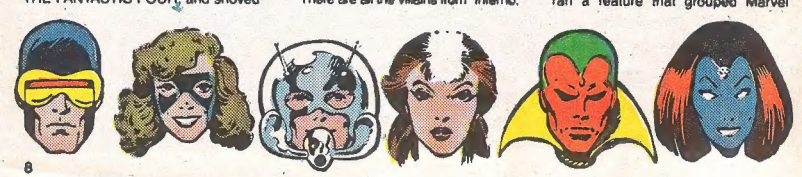
In addition, there are individual entries on all the members of the **X-Terminators**, including **Boom Boom, Skids, Artie, Rusty, Rictor**, and **Leech**, as well as entries for members of another mutant team, the **Fallen Angels**, including **Ariel, Chance**, and even **Devil Dinosaur** and **Moon Boy.**

And there's **Tyger Tiger** from the new WOLVERINE series, and the **Warwolves** from EXCALIBUR. Is that enough for you, or shall I go on?

No, no, that's fine. How did the HANDBOOK start, and what exactly does it do?

Well, in the beginning there was **Mark Gruenwald**, who, before he joined the Marvel editorial staff, published and edited a fanzine called OMNIVERSE, which I helped write. OMNIVERSE's intent was to chronicle the events and changes in comic book fictional universes and to try to make sense out of them. That's really where the HANDBOOK began.

Later, after Mark became an assistant editor at Marvel, one of the annuals ran a feature that grouped Marvel



MARVEL UPDATE

super heroes according to their levels of strength. This proved to be popular with the readers, so **Jim Shooter**, who was then editor in chief, decided to do a "Marvel Specifications Book," that would list the strength levels, heights and weights, and other statistics for the various characters. Mark took this idea and evolved it into an encyclopedia of the Marvel Universe, which is basically what the HANDBOOK is. Mark has edited the HANDBOOK from its very beginnings, aided along the way by assistants **Mike Carlin**, **Howard Mackie**, and **Greg Wright**, as well as our technical writer and artist **Eliot Brown** and **David Wohl**, whose specialty was locating artwork to run as illustrations.

Mark wrote over half of the first version of the HANDBOOK, which ran for fifteen 32-page issues, with entries that rarely ran over a page in length. I came aboard the project early on and ended up writing the second largest number of entries for it.

A few years later we started work on the second edition of the Handbook, the "Deluxe" edition, which so far has run for twenty sixty-four page issues, and has been repackaged as a set of ten trade paperbacks. Mark and I each wrote half the entries for this version, but I took over as sole writer on the final issues, which chronicled the lives of the deceased Marvel characters.

The UPDATE is handled by the editorial team of Mark Gruenwald, managing editor Greg Wright, and assistant editors David Wohl and **Sara Tuchinsky**. It will run for six issues, according to our current plans, and I'm writing the whole thing this time.

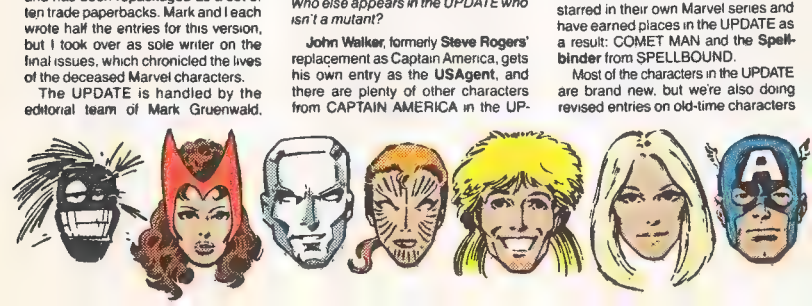
As for what the HANDBOOK does, basically it is an encyclopedia of all the major characters, places, and organizations in the Marvel Universe. An entry for a character such as **Captain America** will begin with a list of basic information, including his real name, his known relatives, the place where he operates, what teams he belongs to, and where he made his first appearance in a Marvel story. This is followed by a biography of the character, recounting all of the major events of his life. This in turn is followed by descriptions of his physical characteristics: his height, weight, eye and hair color, strength level, and a listing and explanation of any super human powers he might have. Finally, we list whatever abilities he might have that do not fall under the category of super powers, like knowledge of fighting methods or scientific expertise in any particular area.

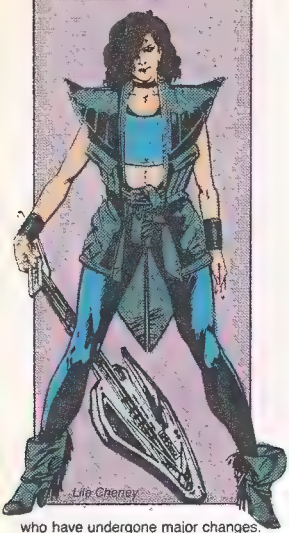
Who else appears in the UPDATE who isn't a mutant?

John Walker, formerly **Steve Rogers'** replacement as Captain America, gets his own entry as the **USAgent**, and there are plenty of other characters from CAPTAIN AMERICA in the UPDATE as well: **Battle Star**, the **Commission**, the **Watchdogs**, the **Resistants**, **Left-Winger** and **Right-Winger**, the new members of the **Serpent Society**, and the resurrected **Red Skull**. From THE FANTASTIC FOUR, there will be **Kristoff**, the child posing as **Doctor Doom**, the electronic villain, **Fasaud**, and the enigmatic, all-powerful **Beyonders**. From SPIDER-MAN comes the **Chameleon**, the **Black Fox**, the new **Tarantula**, the new **Hobgoblin**, **Tombstone**, and another **Chance** — not the same one from Fallen Angels. There is a pack of new villains from DAREDEVIL: **Ammo**, **Bushwacker**, and **Bullet**. The Celtic god, **Leir**, the Egyptian death god, **Seth**, and the criminal, **Quicksand** turn up from the pages of THOR. The **Purple Girl**, **Mr. Jeffries** in his new role as **Box**, and **Goblyn** show up from ALPHA FLIGHT, as does **Mister Jip** from CLOAK AND DAGGER, and **Kamuu** and the sinister alien, **Urthona** from DOCTOR STRANGE. You'll see the **Ghost** and the new **Blizzard** from IRON MAN and **the Night Shift** from CAPTAIN AMERICA and WEST COAST AVENGERS.

And then there are characters who starred in their own Marvel series and have earned places in the UPDATE as a result: COMET MAN and the **Spellbinder** from SPELLBOUND.

Most of the characters in the UPDATE are brand new, but we're also doing revised entries on old-time characters





who have undergone major changes. So you'll see an entry on **Iron Man**'s newest suit of armor, and a revised entry on the grey **Hulk** that supplants the previous one that dealt with him when he was green.

Other characters in the UPDATE are longtime characters who have been inactive or little used for several years or longer, but who have recently returned in a Marvel story or who are just about to make a comeback. Hence, thanks to the recent return of MASTER OF KUNG FU in MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS, we will be running entries on **Shang-Chi**'s allies, **Black Jack Tarr, Clive Reston, Leiko Wu**, and **Cat**. Two Golden Age characters who are coming back, the original **Human Torch** and the **Blonde Phantom**, will get biographies this time around. And even **Howard the Duck**'s archfoe, **Doctor Bong**, will get an entry, due to his forthcoming return in SHE-HULK.

What's the difference between the UPDATE and previous versions of the HANDBOOK?

One major difference is that this time all the artwork we run will be brand new. In the Deluxe HANDBOOK we would have a full-figure picture of whatever character the entry was about done specifically for the HANDBOOK, and then there would be various pictures showing the character in action culled from his past appearances in Marvel stories. In the UPDATE all the action shots will be new, as well. In part that's because most of the characters in the UPDATE are relatively new, so they haven't appeared in that many stories yet that we could pull action shots from. But I think that having all this new art in the series will make the book more interesting visually. As usual, we try to get the artist most associated with the character to do him or her for the HANDBOOK, and **Joe Rubinstein** inks all the new art to give a consistent look to the series.

Another major difference is that we've expanded the scope of the HANDBOOK. Originally, we only covered characters who had costumes, super powers, or both—in other words, mainly super heroes and super-villains. When we did the Deluxe version of the HANDBOOK, we started adding entries on non-costumed characters who either acted as adventurers themselves, like **Rick Jones** and **Wyatt Wingfoot**, or held powerful positions on Marvel-Earth, like **J. Jonah Jameson** and **Henry Peter Gyrich**. Then, when we got to the "Book of the Dead" issues, we started listing deceased characters who did not have super powers or positions of authority, but who nevertheless played important parts in the lives of our major characters, like **Peter Parker**'s **Uncle Ben** and his girlfriend, **Gwen Stacy**.

There's just as much reason to list the major supporting characters as there is to list the villains. So this time with the HANDBOOK we're doing entries on a lot of these characters. There is no room to cover everybody, so many characters will have to wait for future updates to get a full-length HANDBOOK treatment. But we've made a start, and we have plenty to deal with this time around. **Mary Jane Watson-Parker** gets an entry, of course, as do **Aunt May, Flash Thompson**, and **Harry Osborn**. **Johnny Storm**'s wife, **Alicia**, will get one, and so will **Betty Ross Banner**. There will be **Karen Page** and **Foggy Nelson** from DAREDEVIL, and **Moira MacTaggert** from THE X-MEN, just to name a few.

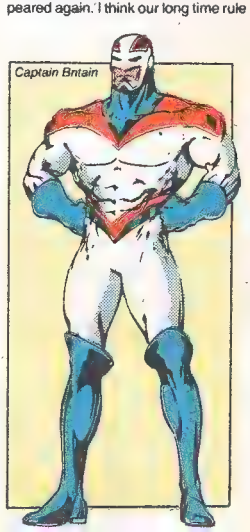
For me, personally, there are two big differences between the UPDATE and the previous HANDBOOKS. This time I'm the sole writer on the UPDATE. But now I'm writing the entries on a computer, so I'm no longer drowning in white-out, or battling typewriter keys when they get stuck. Writing the HANDBOOK has become much more peaceful and organized, and now that I keep past entries on computer disks, I won't have to move to another apartment just to store stacks of entries written on typing paper. It's hard enough storing all the comics I use for research.

Why are you doing an UPDATE now, and whatever happened to the Appendix?

Ah, yes. Readers of the HANDBOOK know that there are innumerable references in each issue to the Appendix. In the original HANDBOOK, each issue had Appendix pages which contained brief entries for characters who were not deemed to be important enough to get full page entries in the main text. With the second version of the HANDBOOK, our plan was to do all the Appendix entries in one or more separate issues after we finished all the major A through Z entries.

So we did ABOMINATION through ZZZAX, and then we did all the major deceased characters, and we planned to do the Appendix next. But it had taken us around two years to do all those issues, and in the meantime a very large number of new characters deserving of full-length entries had appeared. I pointed out to Mark that it didn't make much sense to give brief descriptions of all of these new characters in the Appendix and then do full-scale entries for them in the UPDATE right afterwards. What we should do, I thought, was to do the UPDATE first in order to take care of all these new characters, and then to do the Appendix, and he agreed.

So I'll begin work on the Appendix after I finish all the work on the UPDATE. Mark and I have not discussed the Appendix in detail as yet, but I do know that our intention is to list every character of any significance whatsoever in the Marvel Universe. This is not to say that you'd find, say, a character named **Fred** who had one line of dialogue in an IT, THE LIVING COLOSSUS story and never appeared again. I think our long time rule



that a character would have to have made at least three significant appearances in order to get an entry in the HANDBOOK would still apply. But our hope is that the Appendix would list all of those three-timer characters. There'll be lots of illustrations, too, so you won't just have a book full of text.

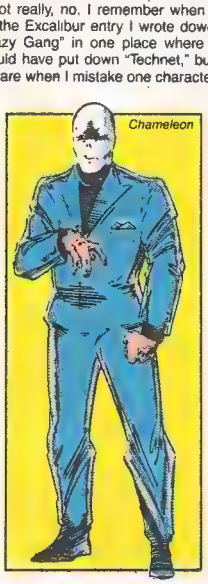
How do you memorize all this information?

I don't. I just happen to remember a lot of it, but I don't sit down to memorize anything. If I enjoy a story, then I'll remember what happened in it, and I do try to read everything Marvel publishes that is set in the Marvel Universe. Unfortunately, it's harder for me to recall bad stories in detail, I'm bad at remembering issue numbers, though sometimes I surprise myself. Recently, I was asked which issue of SUB-MARINER **Toro** appeared in and I came up with exactly the right issue number off the top of my head. But that's unusual for me.

Some Marvel writers and editors call me up every so often to ask me some continuity question, and if I don't know the answer, I will know where to look to find the information. That's the real secret of writing the HANDBOOK: knowing where to look amidst all the stories Marvel has published since 1961.

Don't you ever get confused by all the data you have to compile?

Not really, no. I remember when I did the Excalibur entry I wrote down "Crazy Gang" in one place where I should have put down "Technet," but it's rare when I mistake one character or group for another like that, and I did catch the mistake.


Chameleon

As you'd have to expect with a project as immense as the HANDBOOK, errors do creep in, and we've run corrections when we can. But almost always, what mistakes do occur are of very minor importance. I'm impressed by the fact that the HANDBOOK has numerous readers who care enough about the project and about the history of our characters that they do catch mistakes that slip by us and write in to point them out.

How often can we expect to see UPDATEs in the future?

Wait a minute! What do you mean the next one? I'm still working on this one! Give me a break!

One of the distressing things about doing the HANDBOOK is that it sometimes seems as if as soon as an issue comes out, it starts to become outdated. Sometimes it happens even sooner than that. Only two weeks after I handed in the entry on the new **Hobgoblin**, I learned about his new demonic powers, so I'm going to have to revise that entry before it's even published! Some of the earliest pieces I turned in for the UPDATE will have to be revised before they go to press because the characters have continued to change since I wrote them. In fact, I've already begun to make a list of new characters and concepts that I can't cover in this UPDATE because they won't appear till after the 1989 UPDATE comes out, like the new **Deathlok** and the **Legion of Night**.

But I can't say when another UPDATE will appear. We're basically taking the HANDBOOK one step at a time. This year we're publishing the six-issue UPDATE and starting work on the Appendix, which I suspect will end up being published under a more exciting name. I presume the Appendix will appear in 1990. And what happens after that I just don't know. I wouldn't be surprised if there's a gap in time between the appearance of the Appendix and whatever HANDBOOK-related project we do next, to give both us and the marketplace a respite. I assume that eventually another UPDATE series would appear, and that inevitably, sometime in the future the entire HANDBOOK will be revised yet again, but exactly when any of this would happen I have no idea.

But the Marvel Universe does not stand still. When the first HANDBOOK series came out, a lot of people in the business were complaining that we had set everything about the characters down in stone and that no one could develop the characters any further. Well, that's turned out to be completely wrong, and I should know. The vast majority of the entries from the original

Bird Brain

HANDBOOK had to be updated and expanded for the Deluxe version, often by me, because so much new information had been revealed about the characers. The **Cloak** entry, for example, had to be expanded from half a page to four! More often these days I hear other professionals comment that the Handbook is a valuable research tool for them, especially for writers who return to Marvel after years of working elsewhere who want to find out what's happened to the characters in the meantime.

What question do you get asked most often about your work?

"Haven't you gone crazy yet from doing this series?"

Well, haven't you?

No, not yet. Ask me again when I'm working on the Appendix. If that doesn't drive me insane, nothing will.

But I don't think that will do it, either. I actually enjoy working on the HANDBOOK. **Peter Gillis** once observed that Marvel Universe is the subject of the most extensive body of fiction in history, surpassing even all of the works written about **King Arthur** and other legendary figures. I see the HANDBOOK as an encyclopedia chronicling the histories of all the characters in this immense fictional creation, and no matter how much of an effort it is to gather all the information together and organize it, I always have a feeling of satisfaction when I finish yet another entry for the book.

— Peter Sanderson

Trying to describe Marvel's two newest series sounds like a take-off of an old **Abbott** and **Costello** routine:

"WHAT IF. . .? is back."

"WHAT THE——?"

"That, too."

"What, too?"

"WHAT IF. . .?"

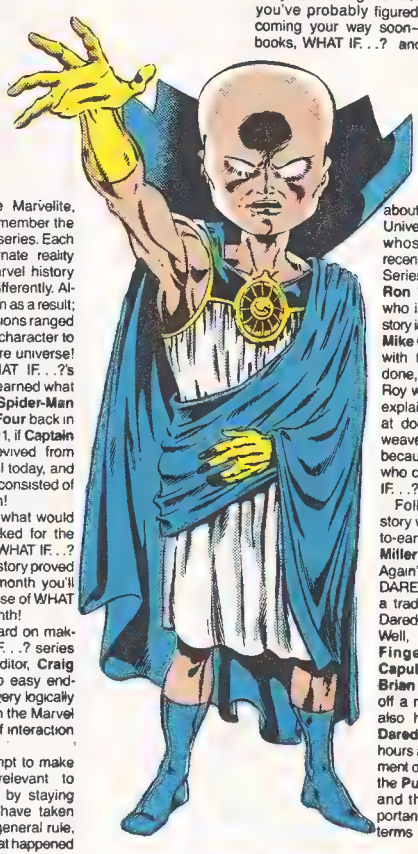
"What if what?"

"Not 'WHAT IF WHAT?' WHAT IF. . .?"

"What the——?!"

"That, too."

If you haven't gotten completely bewildered by now, you've probably figured out which two series will be coming your way soon—those two high-"whattage" books, WHAT IF. . .? and WHAT THE——?!



If you're a long-time Marvelite, then you probably remember the original WHAT IF. . .? series. Each issue looked at an alternate reality where some event in Marvel history happened just a little bit differently. Almost anything could happen as a result; many times, the repercussions ranged from the death of a major character to the destruction of the entire universe! Over the course of WHAT IF. . .?'s forty-eight-issue run, we learned what would have happened if **Spider-Man** had joined the **Fantastic Four** back in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1, if **Captain America** hadn't been revived from suspended animation until today, and even if the Fantastic Four consisted of the original Marvel Bullpen!

More recently, we saw what would happen if **Iron Man** worked for the Communists in last year's WHAT IF. . .? one-shot special. And the story proved so successful that next month you'll be getting a brand new dose of WHAT IF. . .? each and every month!

"We've worked really hard on making this the best WHAT IF. . .? series ever!" says the series' editor, **Craig Anderson**. "There are no easy endings, but everything ends very logically and is firmly entrenched in the Marvel Universe, so there's lots of interaction with other characters.

"We're making an attempt to make the series especially relevant to today's Marvel continuity by staying mostly with stories that have taken place in the 1980s. As a general rule, we won't be doing things that happened twenty-five years ago."

In fact, the first issue is about as current as you can get! It's set during the Evolutionary War that raged through last summer's annuals, and it asks the question, "What If the Avengers lost the Evolutionary War?" In this reality, the **Avengers** arrive just a little too late, and the Evolutionary Bomb goes off! As its effects spread around the world, it causes bizarre mutations in normal people. . .and you can imagine what it does to those folks who were already superhuman! According to Craig, "The story spans five hundred to a thousand years and features about every blamed hero in the Marvel Universe!" It's written by **Roy Thomas**, whose work has been seen most recently on the SUB-MARINER Limited Series, penciled by WOLFPACK artist **Ron Wilson**, and inked by the guy who inked our reality's version of the story in last year's AVENGERS ANNUAL, **Mike Gustovich**. While Craig is happy with the work the whole team has done, he's particularly pleased to have Roy writing the premiere issue; as he explains, "It's partly because he's great at doing these sorts of stories that weave loose ends together, and also because in the '70s, he was the one who came up with the idea for WHAT IF. . .? to begin with!"

Following the Evolutionary War story will be a much more gritty, down-to-earth tale which plays off the **Frank Miller** and **David Mazzucchelli** "Born Again" storyline that appeared in DAREDEVIL (and is now available in a trade paperback edition): "What If Daredevil had killed the Kingpin?" Well, as depicted by writer **Danny Fingeroth**, and penciler **Greg Capullo**, and inkers **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**, it would not only touch off a massive gang war, but it would also have grave consequences for **Daredevil** himself! Before forty-eight hours are up, he encounters an assortment of friends and foes which includes the **Punisher, Spider-Man,** the **Rose,** and the **Hobgoblin**, and more importantly, he also has to try to come to terms with what he's done. Can he

deal with the burden on his conscience, or will this prove to be the end of the Man Without Fear?

Next up, scripter **Jim Valentino** and artist **Dave Simons** look at Captain America's encounter with the U.S. Government and ask, "What If Captain America had refused to give up his shield?" To start with, he would've been branded an outlaw! What follows is a truly unusual story which Craig describes by saying, "It features **Nick Fury, Rick Jones, Freedom Force,** the **Avengers,** and the **Super-Patriot,** and it has overtones of the film *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington!*"

Issue #4 takes place back when Spider-Man was still hanging around with the **Black Cat,** as writer **Danny Fingeroth** and artists **Mark Bagley** and **Keith Williams** pose the question, "What If the alien costume had taken over Spider-Man?" And the danger doesn't end when it takes control of the wall-crawler's body—before it's through, the alien parasite has taken over the **Hulk** and **Thor** and is threatening the entire world! Will the might of even the Fantstic Four and the Avengers be enough to defeat it? In an alternate universe, it's anyone's guess!

Future plans incude a special two-story issue, the first half of which asks "What if **Wonder Man** hadn't died in THE AVENGERS #9?," written and penciled by **Jim Valentino.** If Wondy hadn't died, **Ultron** couldn't have programmed his brain patterns into the **Vision,** and that leads straight into the second half: "What If the Vision had destroyed the **Avengers** in THE AVENGERS #57?"

Most issues will feature a full-length 28-page story. Some will contain a 20-page lead story and a short back-up. As Craig explains, "the back-ups will be short 'happy ending' stories—things like 'What If Scott Summers and Jean Grey lived happily ever after?' A lot of the time, the consequences of WHAT IF. . .? stories are pretty depressing, so these stories will be a counter-point."

On top of that, there will be surprise one-page humor features. "The features will be in the tradition of the humor issue of WHAT IF. . .? which the fans loved so much," Craig says.

As you might have guessed from the range and scope of the series' material, Craig has high hopes for the latest incarnation of WHAT IF. . .? "We're working with some of the most creative minds in the industry and doing stories that will thrill and surprise our readers," Craig says, adding a friendly challenge to Marveldom at large: "You won't be able to guess the endings!"

Any takers?

If WHAT IF. . .? provides an off-beat look at Marvel continuity, then WHAT THE--?! is completely off the wall! WHAT THE--?! began as a four-issue limited series which followed in the tradition set by NOT BRAND ECCH in the '60s, presenting the wackier side of the Marvel Universe and the people in it. We had the opportunity to witness a no-holds (or gags)-barred battle between **Stuporman** and the **Fantastical Four,** a day at home with the **Vizzion** and the **Scarlett Wench** (not to mention their countless friends, foes, and relatives), and even breathtaking new adventures of **Forbush-Man** and **Peter Porker, the Spectacular Spider-Ham!**

The limited series was quite a hit; mail poured in demanding that WHAT THE—?! become a regular ongoing series. As editor **Carl Potts** recalls, "We received ten pieces of WHAT THE—?! mail for every piece of PUNISHER mail, and THE PUNISHER gets a good deal of mail!"

Well, we may not be the most perceptive guys in town, but even we know what that kind of response means. So keep an eye peeled, because twice each year, you'll find a brand new issue of WHAT THE—?! waiting for you! Each issue will be forty-eight pages long and contain no ads ("Just a lot of fake ads," Carl laughs).

The first issue of the new series leads off with the battle so many of you have been asking for (well, sort of, anyway). . .That's right—at long last, everyone's favorite homicidal mutant, **Wulvoream** will be going toe to toe with the **Pulverizer**! How the battle ends, only creators **Hilary Barta** and **Doug Rice** know, but one thing's for certain: It's sure to be almost as wild as the real thing!

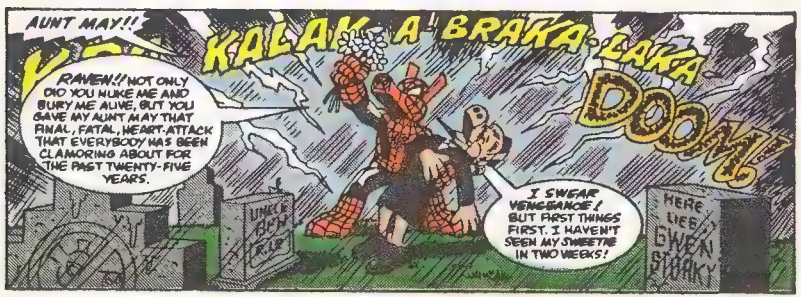
Rounding out the issue will be a fairly twisted look at Epic Comics as scripter **Chuck Dixon** and artist **Larry Stroman** tear into the SHADOWLINE SAGA, MARSHAL LAW, and the ALIEN LEGION. And there are also parodies of the **Hulk** by **Peter B. Gillis** and **Erik Larsen** and **Thor** by Peter, **Whilce Portacio**, and **Scott Williams**, not to mention a trip north of the border to visit **Alpha Splat**, courtesy of **Marcus McLauren** and **Donald Hudson**. Even the big man himself, **Stan Lee**, couldn't resist getting into the act by scripting a tale of the space-surfing **Silver Burper**!

And as if that weren't enough, there'll be one-page parodies of the classic ads found so often in comic books.

Carl's plans for future issues include the untold origin of the Pulverizer, a gargantuan gathering of swamp creatures, and even an **X-Men** parody by **John Byrne**!

So if you're looking for a change of pace, or just something to fill the gap between giant mutant crossovers, you might want to check out an issue or two of the all-new WHAT THE—?! After all, a joke is a terrible thing to waste!

—Shelly Fisch


AUNT MAY!!
KA-LAM-A-BRAKA-LAKA
DOOM!
RAVEN!! NOT ONLY DID YOU NUKE ME AND BURY ME ALIVE, BUT YOU SAVE MY AUNT MAY THAT FINAL, FATAL, HEART-ATTACK THAT EVERYBODY HAS BEEN CLAMORING ABOUT FOR THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.
I SWEAR VENGEANCE! BUT FIRST THINGS FIRST. I HAVEN'T SEEN MY SWEETIE IN TWO WEEKS!
HERE LIES GWEN STACY

Let's face it, I've been spoiled! Living here in sunny California for the past few years I've almost forgotten how cold it can get in other parts of the country!

Which is, of course, just a sneaky way of telling you about my recent visit to Rochester, New York, where I was guest speaker at a showing of "Comic Book Confidential," a unique new feature-length movie that attempts to trace the development of comics from their earliest days to the present. I figured you might be interested, and since nothing's too good for a fellow Soapboxer, here's the scoop. . .

The project was produced and directed by **Ron Mann**, a talented young Canadian filmmaker with a number of prize-winning documentaries to his credit, such as "Imagine the Sound" (1981) about jazz musicians **Cecil Taylor**, **Archie Shepp**, **Bill Dixon**, and **Paul Bley**; plus "Poetry in Motion" (1982) illuminating such North American poets as **John Cage**, **Tom Waits**, **William S. Burroughs**, and **Charles Bukowski**.

But, if you think those names are impressive, here are some of the ones you'll meet in "Comic Book Confidential". . .

For starters, how does **Robert Crumb** grab ya? (Remember "Fritz the Cat" and "Keep on Truckin'"?) Also included are **Harvey Kurtzman** (creator of Mad Magazine, Playboy's "Little Annie Fannie" and Marvel's old-time classic strip, "Hey, Look!"), **Frank Miller**, **Jack Kirby** (and if I have to tell you who *they* are, hand in your No-Prize!), **Will Eisner** (creator of "The Spirit" and an all-around great guy), **William Gaines** and **Al Feldstein** (**Bill** is publisher and **Al** was editor of Mad Magazine), **Art Spiegelman** (underground writer/artist and author of the award-winning illustrated novel "Maus"), plus a few other luminaries who'll undoubtedly stick pins in their **Stan Lee** effigies because I forgot to mention them! Oh, that reminds me, I'm in it, too—but don't let that keep you away!

Actually, I didn't intend to make this a pandemonious plug for my man Mann's ninety-minute flick. What I really started out to tell you was how cold it was in Rochester while I was there with Ron, addressing some hundreds of True Believers on a snowy Saturday night at The International Museum of Photography's Dryden Theatre. Later, to make things even worse, it was still colder on the following Sunday when we had a showing for the University of Rochester's Cinema Group. Luckily, the warmth and enthusiasm shown by our audiences more than made up for the frigid temperatures.

But, with the thermometer reading below zero, who was the mental retard who showed up for the occasion wearing his ever-faithful lightweight Los Angeles raincoat? You guessed it! Somehow or other, I had forgotten that the whole world isn't always bathed in California sunshine! So, the purpose of this dazzling little dilatory digression is to thank all those red-blooded Rochesterians for their courtesy, their hospitality, and for all the aspirins, hot water bottles, and chicken soup they so graciously provided! And if I ever completely thaw out, I'll thank 'em personally!

Now, on to other equally earth-shattering matters of near-cosmic import!

As I sit here penning these fateful words, it's the middle of December '88. Our new owners, the lucky guys who bought Marvel Comics, won't actually assume command until early January. That means by the time you get around to gratefully eyeballing our next stupifying Soapbox, I'll probably have a lot to tell you about how they plan to run the show. So stay with us, heroes; life here in the batty Bullpen seems to be as fraught with suspense and excitement as any of our comic book yarns, and you can count on generous ol' Stan to give you a ringside blow-by-blow of everything that happens!

Hey, speaking of suspense and excitement, wouldja believe that the screenplay for the **Spider-Man** motion picture (being produced by Cannon Film) is being rewritten for the zillionth time? In fact, as soon as I finish writing this column, which I'm scribbling on a note pad while waiting for takeoff at New York's Kennedy Airport, and as soon as I land in L.A., the new Spidey screenplay should be waiting for me at home! Boy, if ever I wished I had the hammer of **Thor** to get me there faster! If this latest version of Spidey's first feature film turns out okay (and I've got a hunch that it will), the cameras will start rolling soon and you'll be watching the world's favorite web-spinner, bigger than life, on movie screens everywhere! You'll probably be ready for him, too, 'cause **The Punisher** movie will have already whetted your appetite!

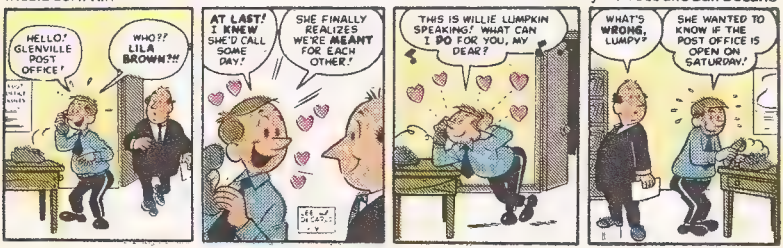
And now, till **Odin** borrows **Professor X's** barber, this is your globe-trotting bullpen buddy wishing you good luck, good times, and good reading—and remember, wherever you go, whatever you do, when things start getting heavy, take a mutant to tea!

Excelsior!

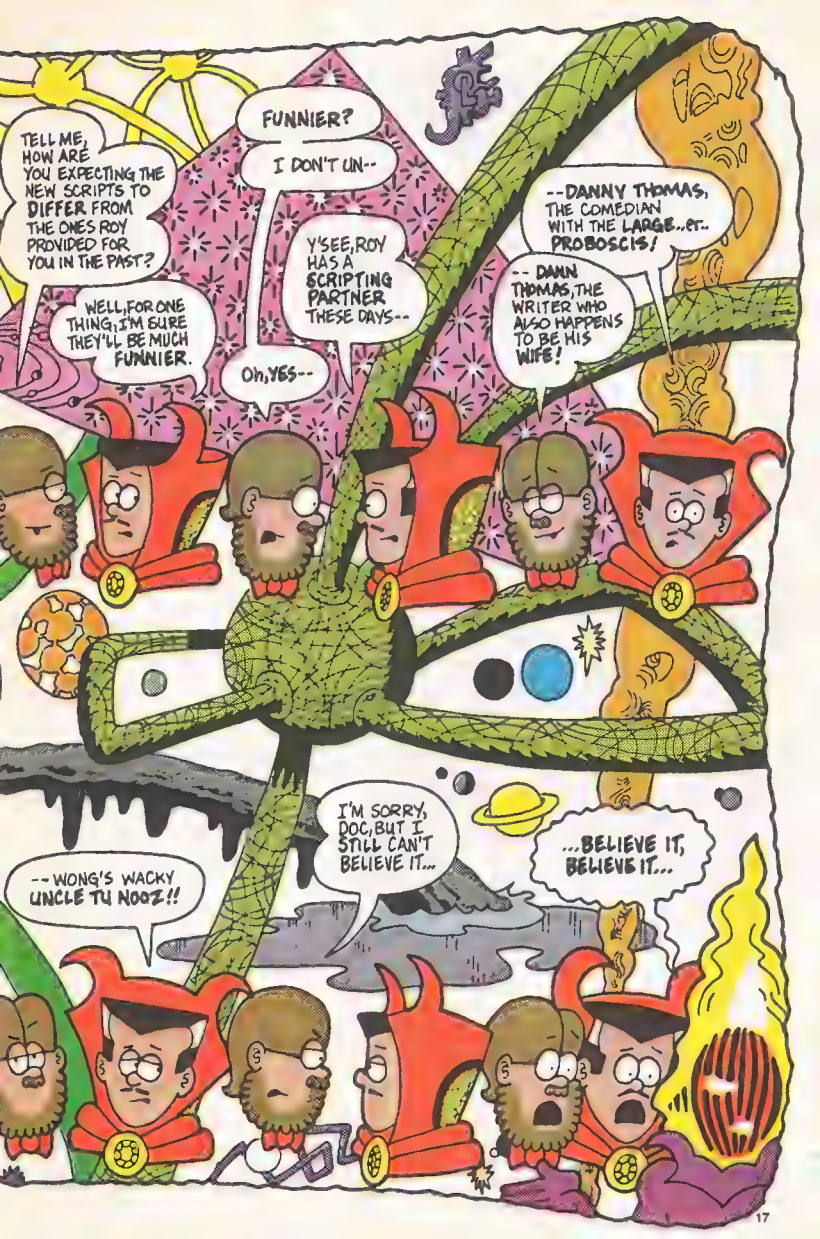
Stan

WILLIE LUMPKIN

© 1988 by Stan Lee and Dan DeCarlo


HELLO? GLENVILLE POST OFFICE?
WHO?? LILA BROWN?!!
AT LAST! I KNEW SHE'D CALL SOME DAY!
SHE FINALLY REALIZES WE'RE MEANT FOR EACH OTHER!
THIS IS WILLIE LUMPKIN SPEAKING! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, MY DEAR?
WHAT'S WRONG, LUMPY?
SHE WANTED TO KNOW IF THE POST OFFICE IS OPEN ON SATURDAY!

..AND NOW, ON LOCATION FROM THE DARK DIMENSION, IT'S THE FRED HEMBECK SHOW!
HELLO, EVERYONE! THANKS FOR JOINING US, AND SPECIAL THANKS TO DORMAMMU FOR LETTING US BROADCAST FROM HIS REALM.
WE'RE HERE TODAY TO SPEAK WITH AN OLD FRIEND, DR. STRANGE, SORCERER SUPREME--
HELLO, FRED.
-- WHICH, INCIDENTALLY, IS THE OFFICIAL TITLE OF YOUR BRAND NEW FULL-LENGTH MARVEL COMIC!
THAT'S TRUE.
IT'S A REAL THRILL HAVING YOU BACK, DOC, AND I IMAGINE IT'S A REAL THRILL HAVING YOUR ADVENTURES CHRONICLED BY A MAN WHO HAD QUITE AN IMPACT ON YOUR STRIP EARLY ON IN BOTH HIS AND YOUR CAREERS, MISTER ROY THOMAS!!
YES, IT IS, FRED.
YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN, DOCTOR. SURELY--
I DIDN'T BELIEVE IT AT FIRST, EITHER, BUT THEN I GOT A LOOK AT THE FIRST OF THEIR SCRIPTS--
(...AND DON'T CALL ME "SHIRLEY"!..)
--"MAKE ROOM FOR DORMAMMU"!!
AND IF THAT'S NOT BAD ENOUGH, ON PAGE TWO, A NEW SUPPORTING CHARACTER IS INTRODUCED--
HUH?


TELL ME, HOW ARE YOU EXPECTING THE NEW SCRIPTS TO DIFFER FROM THE ONES ROY PROVIDED FOR YOU IN THE PAST?
WELL, FOR ONE THING, I'M SURE THEY'LL BE MUCH FUNNIER.
FUNNIER?
I DON'T UN--
Y'SEE, ROY HAS A SCRIPTING PARTNER THESE DAYS--
Oh, YES--
--DANNY THOMAS, THE COMEDIAN WITH THE LARGE...er.. PROBOSCIS!
-- DANN THOMAS, THE WRITER WHO ALSO HAPPENS TO BE HIS WIFE!
--WONG'S WACKY UNCLE TU NOOZ!!
I'M SORRY, DOC, BUT I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
...BELIEVE IT, BELIEVE IT...

It was over twenty years ago that Marvel's Sorcerer Supreme, **Doctor Strange**, first received his very own comic book. **Roy Thomas** was the new book's writer, and after the first few issues he was joined by **Gene Colan** as penciler. Together they transported Doctor Strange to the demon-filled dimension where both **Clea**, the woman Doctor Strange loved, and his most diabolical enemy, the dread **Dormammu**, were entrapped. Thomas and Colan showed us Strange battling for his life in the clock dimension of **Lord Nekron**, facing the madness of his foe, **Nightmare**, in Times Square on New Year's Eve, struggling against the hooded **Sons of Satannish**, and, finally, learning of the ancient threat posed to mankind by the mysterious **Undying Ones**.

But no sooner was that last and most intriguing storyline introduced than the series abruptly, without warning, came to an end. But now, after a gap of decades, Roy Thomas is at last returning to the series for which he wrote some of his most memorable stories, planning to pick up in a sense where he left off. He takes over DOCTOR STRANGE with issue five of the current series, joined by his wife and frequent collaborator, **Dann Thomas**, penciler **Jackson Guice**, inker **Jose Marzan**, and editor **Ralph Macchio**, who are also all new to the series.

"The irony," Roy comments, "which I think it was Ralph who pointed out the other day—was that when (I start again on DOCTOR STRANGE) with number five, it'll have been exactly twenty years since DOCTOR STRANGE was discontinued with Colan and me in 1969. It doesn't seem that long," he says, laughing.

How does he feel to be back on DOCTOR STRANGE after so long? "It feels great to me," he responds. When I started writing it, I had a real ball, especially when Gene Colan came aboard. It really feels great to get back to the strip again, and I found a lot of ideas that I had twenty years ago and just didn't get to do, added to some new things that I think will be good for the strip. I'm real happy that Ralph decided I was the right person to do it. Actually, of course, Dann is co-plotting it with me, and I'll be doing all the actual dialogue."

Asked what kind of direction he intends to take in the series, Roy says, "It's really kind of a back to the basics approach, but the basics will be the basics from our strip—Gene Colan's and mine—as much as or more than (Strange's creators **Stan Lee** and (**Steve**) **Ditko's**. Ralph and I decided we wanted to emphasize certain things which he and I had both particularly liked from that later period, one of which was the human side of Doctor Strange. That is not to say that other people—**Peter Gillis** and so forth—have not done their own versions of this, but was something that I got more into because of Gene Colan's art style in the early days. Gene didn't feel at home, really, with the Ditko kind of world, the other dimensions and so forth. That really wasn't his forte, so we emphasized the human side of Doctor Strange.

"I think that will fit in very well with Jackson Guice, who says he was a big admirer of Colan's DOCTOR STRANGE. It turns out that was one of his major influences when he was starting out.

"So we want to emphasize Doctor Strange's humanity more, and at the same time we want to go in the direction of what is often called 'Lovecraftian horror,' which I was moving towards in the very last issue of the series." **H.P. Lovecraft** was the author active in the 1930's who wrote a number of influential horror stories postulating that our reality *is* menaced by monstrous elder gods from realms beyond the knowledge of most of mankind. Lovecraft's fictional creations make up the basis

of "the Cthulhu mythos," named after the most infamous of Lovecraft's monsters, which has been elaborated upon by many other fantasy writers. The Undying Ones, introduced in Roy's final issue of DOCTOR STRANGE, were creations very much in the Lovecraft tradition. "Unfortunately," Roy continues, the Undying Ones storyline "had to be finished off in a couple of other books, HULK and SUB-MARINER, where (it) didn't work out in the same way (due to) the use of other characters and other artists and so forth.

"The last regular issue of DOCTOR STRANGE (in 1969) I did, started out with a quote from 'The Call of Cthulhu' by Lovecraft, which I think is the real underpinning of that entire mythos and the entire Lovecraftian feel. (The quotation states) that we live on a small island in the middle of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. And the other quotation that goes along with that is that if mankind knew what was going on all around it in the universe, it would probably go mad or commit suicide, and the great protection of the human race is the inability to put everything together and understand that.

"We—Ralph, Jackson, Dann, and myself—all want to emphasize Doctor Strange even more than before as the sentinel who stands at this gateway between Earth and the other dimension to keep (threats from) those dimensions from coming in, and perhaps even to keep mankind from finding out about these yawning abysses that lie beyond and that menace mankind. Of course, there's a greater risk to him.

"I think he's (Lovecraft) been really big in the last twenty years. I only heard of him myself not too long before I started quoting him in the book, from **Allyn Brodsky**, who was working at Marvel at the time. I picked up a complete collection of Lovecraft work and I read a goodly portion of it. Of course, he was a big influence on **Robert E. Howard** (the creator of **Conan**) and others. I'd like to incorporate the Cthulhu mythos into DOCTOR STRANGE just as at one point we used some of the Lovecraftian names and characters created by Robert E. Howard. That's where **Shuma-Gorath** comes from"—the demon who recently reappeared in the DOCTOR STRANGE series—"that name is from Howard."

But the first of the Thomases' storylines, which begins in issue five and will run for several issues, deals not with Lovecraftian monsters but with the return of one of the series' longtime villains. "The first part deals with **Baron Mordo** coming back, more powerful than ever before," Roy explains. Strange nevertheless defeats his old rival, but this is by no means

the end of the story: it is only the beginning. "Really all he's done is fallen into a trap in which Mordo has forced him to protect Mordo's soul."

"This is the thing that made it all fall together," Roy explains. "Dann and I were discussing the plot, and we wanted to deal with a couple of devil-type figures from the Marvel Universe, (and have) two or more of them fighting it out with Earth caught in the middle. Suddenly this idea came that if Mordo wanted to sell his soul in order to get power, since Mordo is rather an unscrupulous person, why would he sell his soul to only one demon when the Marvel Universe has more than one **Satan**-type figure? So he sells his soul to two 'devils' and gets a lot of power; unfortunately, he now has the two devils vying for his soul, and Doctor Strange is forced into the situation of protecting him from both of them," for the Earth itself is imperiled by the demons.

The two demons are **Mephisto**, who is familiar from SILVER SURFER and his own limited series, and **Satannish**, a mystical entity who first appeared in one of the Thomas-Colan DOCTOR STRANGE stories two decades ago. Another mystical entity, **Agamotto**, after who Strange's principal talisman, the Eye of Agamotto, was named will be "a third and perhaps pivotal player" in the story, according to Roy. Strange will return to the surreal world of Agamotto, which he first visited in the classic DOCTOR STRANGE collaborations by **Steve Englehart** and **Frank Brunner** in the 1970s.

Besides Baron Mordo, other familiar faces will be returning to DOCTOR STRANGE. "We want to bring Clea back as a major character. At the end of one of Peter's (Gillis) recent issues, Doctor Strange and Clea exchange these rings that make them, if not exactly married, at least strongly engaged, let's say. Therefore, I don't think she can be left out." Clea makes a brief appearance in issue five, and will

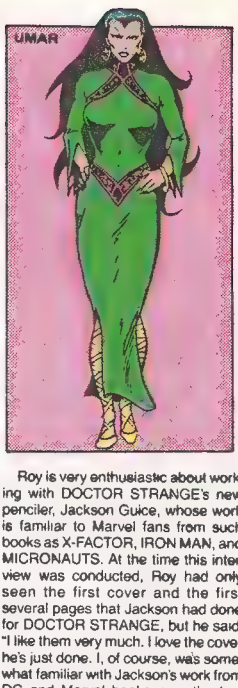
return after the initial storyline is finished.

"My own sentimental favorite is Clea, but there are a lot of interesting women in Doctor Strange's life," Roy notes. "There is **Topaz**, whom we're bringing back, whom he hasn't really had any romance with and **Victoria Bentley**, whom there has been a hint of romance with, and **Sara Wolfe**, (with whom) if there is anything, it's unrequited. And then there's **Morgana Blessing**, more recently. It's kind of hard to sort all these things out; we don't want to make Doc look like he's a womanizer," Roy says, laughing, "but he's just been involved with a lot of women over the years, and we want to bring some of them back as characters."

"I also want to bring back the character **Rintrah**, who was in some recent stories which I rather liked. In some ways he's the opposite number to Doc: he's less of a sorcerer, but he's stronger. He provides some of the muscle. Doc himself, though, will be physically stronger than in the past. "Jackson made him more muscular than he has been in the past, and we're explaining this by saying that Doc has been working out because he's realized that to carry on the kind of battles he's been doing, he needs a lot of stamina, and that means being in good physical shape as well as a good mental shape. We haven't decided yet whether they'll be any (further) visual changes in the way Doctor Strange looks," Roy says, adding that Strange's costume, which he thinks some readers may find 'off-putting', may be changed."

As for major villains, "Dormammu and **Umar** will be back, but not for a little while, because Dormammu was used in numbers one and two (of the current series)."

One reason that Roy wants to emphasize many of Doctor Strange's human side and human friends is one of the same reasons why his first new issue of DOCTOR STRANGE is set in New York City. "I felt a need to use the human realm as a base," Roy explains. "Since he had been out of the country I felt there was a need to get back there (to New York City, his home), to reestablish his relationship with the various people, and to start building from there. To me, Doctor Strange should be on Earth a lot, relating to people, because these are the people he's protecting; these are the people he really cares about. With SUB-MARINER, too," whom Roy is also currently writing, "I feel you need to bring him back to Earth a lot, and not just have him in Atlantis, because it's human beings we're really writing about, and if characters like **Sub-Mariner** or Doctor Strange get too divorced from human beings, I don't think they're as interesting."



Roy is very enthusiastic about working with DOCTOR STRANGE's new penciler, Jackson Guice, whose work is familiar to Marvel fans from such books as X-FACTOR, IRON MAN, and MICRONAUTS. At the time this interview was conducted, Roy had only seen the first cover and the first several pages that Jackson had done for DOCTOR STRANGE, but he said, "I like them very much. I love the cover he's just done. I, of course, was somewhat familiar with Jackson's work from DC and Marvel books over the last few years, and I knew he was a good artist, so I was elated when I got a call from Ralph saying he had volunteered to come on board as the artist. We've talked at great length on the phone, and I have invited him to be part of the process either before or after I write a plot. If he gets an idea or has another way to do things, I want to hear about it."

Starting with issue six, the main feature, drawn by Jackson, will be twenty-four pages long, and there will be a brief backup feature written by Roy and **Jean-Marc Lofficier**; as yet no artist has been chosen for it. This feature will deal with the occult lore of the DOCTOR STRANGE series. "We're going to try to go over the various lore that has been done to date and add to it," Roy explains. "Sometimes these backup features will be coordinated with the main story, sometimes they won't be, but we hope to make them an integral part of the book, something where people feel they're getting their money's worth."

Before returning to Marvel to write THE SAGA OF THE SUB-MARINER, most of Roy's comics work over the last several years had been for the Distinguished Competition. Asked whether writing Marvel characters is different than writing theirs, Roy says, "There is a different feel, and it is hard to put your finger on. I do know that probably because I came in and worked for Marvel for fifteen years, I became very acclimated to the Marvel way of doing things. I helped develop a lot of it to some extent, although a lot of it was in place when I came. Of course, it's changed somewhat since I left and came back, but it's still generally following that original thrust that Stan and Ditko and (**Jack**) **Kirby** and so forth gave it. It seems easier to get into (writing the Marvel characters) in certain ways than writing DC characters, where, even though I like a lot of the DC characters, sometimes I felt like there wasn't anything to grab onto in the first place and you had to build it up from scratch. But, of course, (in the case of DOCTOR STRANGE) this is partly because DOCTOR STRANGE has existed so long, and I've written the character before, and even though there's a lot that's happened in between, the character is still basically the same character. The thing I like about the Marvel characters is for the most part they don't careen back and forth depending on who the writer and artist are. There's sort of a rock bottom solidness to the characters, so it isn't up to every new writer and editor who comes aboard to suddenly veer off in such a totally different direction that you feel you're suddenly reading about a totally different character. If there are changes, as a general rule, they're more evolutionary changes, as opposed to every writer coming in and figuring he's the latest genius and changing everything around. And I think that's one of the reasons that Marvel has done so well over the years.

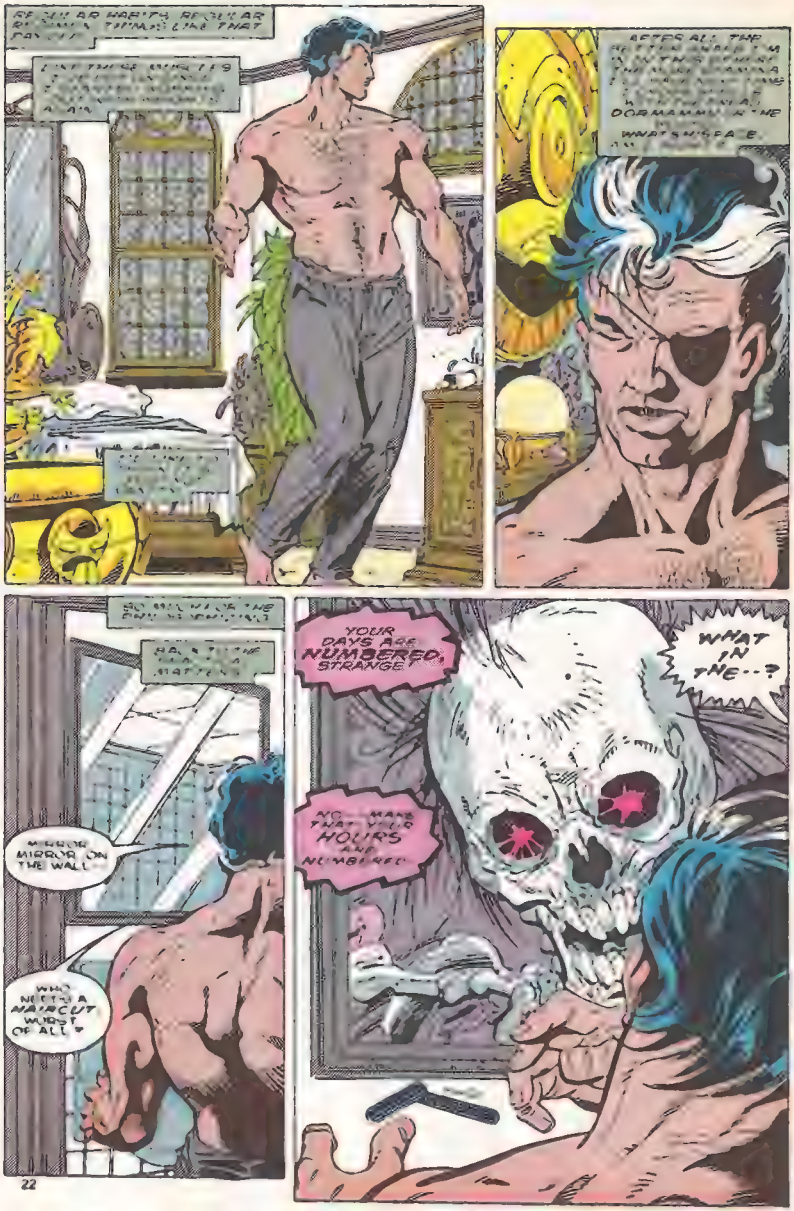
"And, of course, it goes very well with my own orientation, because while I like many of the DC characters and people at DC, my first decade and a half in the field was spent working more or less exclusively for Marvel, and that's always been a powerful influence on me. I feel very happy to be working on (Marvel characters). I don't want to work just on characters I once wrote, necessarily, but it's kind of strange that at one time I was writing DOCTOR STRANGE and SUB-MARINER (simultaneously, in the late 1960s), and this is back to that. At the same time it doesn't feel like some sort of demotion or going backward because these are characters that in many ways I never wanted to leave in the first place. I enjoy writing SUB-MARINER, I enjoy very much writing DOCTOR STRANGE. And it's really good to be back."

—Peter Sanderson

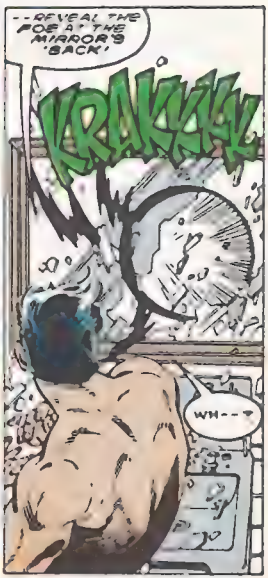
SOULED OUT!

Written by **Roy** and **Dann Thomas**
Penciled by **Jackson Guice**
Inked by **José Marzan**
Lettered by **Janice Chiang**
Colored by **Gregory Wright**
Edited by **Ralph Macchio**

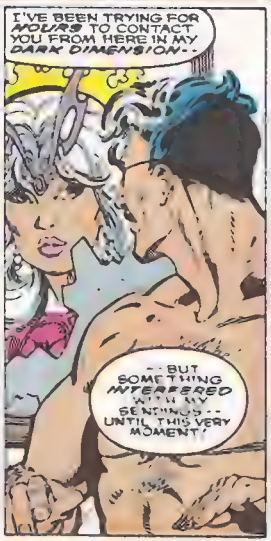
DOCTOR STRANGE
I AM...
AND FOR AWHILE, MANY DAILY WANT THEM TO
I'VE BEEN AWAY BUT I'M BACK
AT LAST I WILL BE AT ONE
SOON AS I CAN GO TO SNAKE


AFTER ALL THE
DORMAMMU IN ME
WHAT'S LEFT
MIRROR ON THE WALL
WHO NEEDS A HAIRCUT WORST OF ALL?
YOUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED, STRANGE!
NO... MAYBE THAT YOUR HOURS ARE NUMBERED.
WHAT IN THE--?

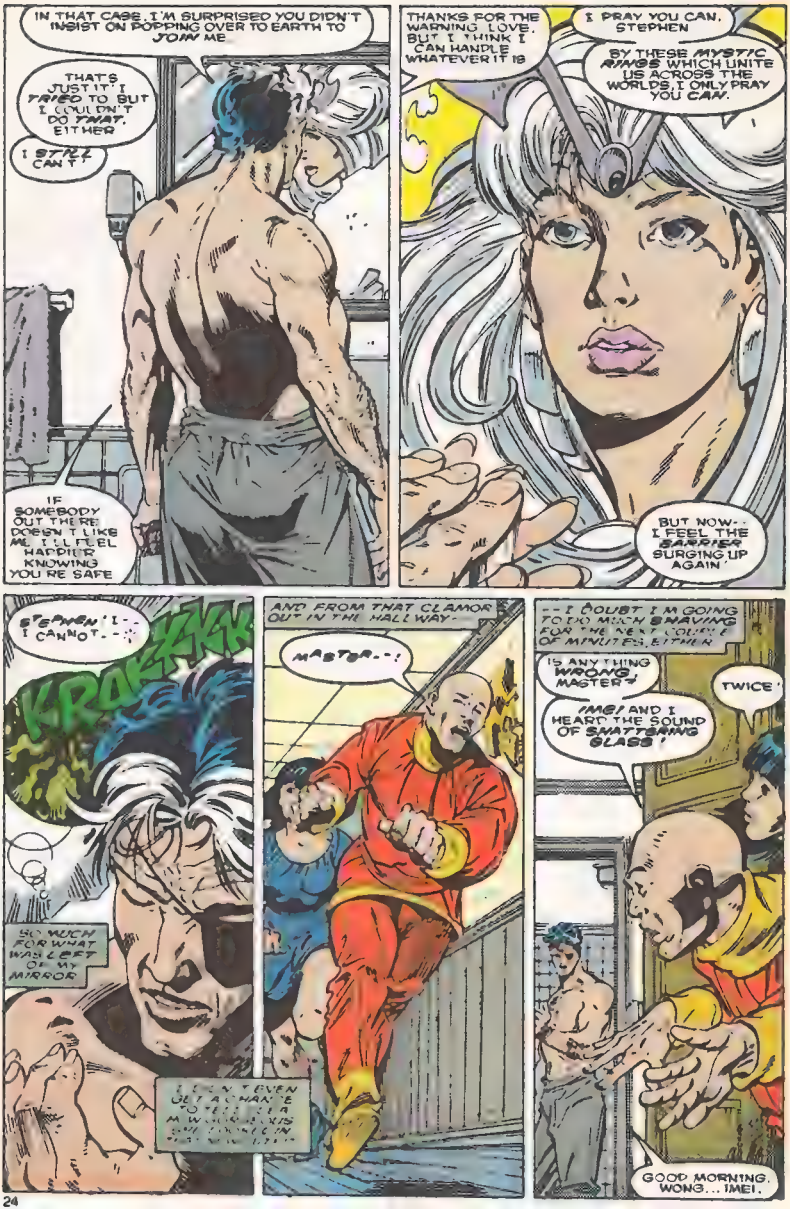
WAIT! BETTER YET--YOUR MINUTES ARE NUMBERED!
OR MAYBE IT'S SECONDS! YEAH, THAT'S IT... YOUR SECONDS ARE--
BY THE DEMONS OF DENAK--


--REVEAL THE FOE AT THE MIRROR'S BACK!
KRAKAK
WH--?

CLEA!?
DON'T TELL ME THIS WAS YOUR IDEA OF A PRACTICAL JOKE
YOU KNOW ME BETTER THAN THAT, STEPHEN!


I'VE BEEN TRYING FOR HOURS TO CONTACT YOU FROM HERE IN MY DARK DIMENSION--
--BUT SOMETHING INTERFERED WITH MY SENDINGS--UNTIL THIS VERY MOMENT!

STATIC IN THE ETHER, EH?
I'M SERIOUS STEPHEN! I FELT AN EVIL PRESENCE--A PRESENCE FROM YOUR PAST--BUT SOMEHOW EVEN MORE POWERFUL, MORE DANGEROUS THAN EVER BEFORE.
OH?


IN THAT CASE, I'M SURPRISED YOU DIDN'T INSIST ON POPPING OVER TO EARTH TO JOIN ME.
THAT'S JUST IT! I TRIED TO, BUT I COULDN'T DO THAT, EITHER.
I STILL CAN'T.
IF SOMEBODY OUT THERE DOESN'T LIKE ME, I'LL FEEL HAPPIER KNOWING YOU'RE SAFE.
THANKS FOR THE WARNING, LOVE. BUT I THINK I CAN HANDLE WHATEVER IT IS.
I PRAY YOU CAN, STEPHEN.
BY THESE MYSTIC ARMOR WHICH UNITE US ACROSS THE WORLDS, I ONLY PRAY YOU CAN.
BUT NOW-- I FEEL THE POWERS SURGING UP AGAIN!
STEPHEN! I-- I CANNOT--
KRAK-KAK
SO MUCH FOR WHAT WAS LEFT OF MY MIRROR.
I CAN'T EVEN GET A MAN TO TELL ME A MYSTICAL LIE ANYMORE IN THIS WORLD!
AND FROM THAT CLAMOR OUT IN THE HALLWAY-
MASTER--!
--I DOUBT I'M GOING TO DO MUCH SHAVING FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF MINUTES, EITHER.
IS ANYTHING WRONG, MASTER?
TWICE!
IMG! AND I HEARD THE SOUND OF SHATTERING GLASS!
GOOD MORNING, WONG... IMEI.

IT WAS ONLY THE BATHROOM MIRROR. I STILL HAVEN'T FULLY ADJUSTED TO LACK OF DEPTH PERCEPTION, I'M AFRAID.
IS THAT... TRULY ALL, MASTER?
ALL THAT MATTERS, MY FRIEND.
COULD YOU TELL BARON I'D LIKE TO SPEAK WITH HER?
I FEAR SHE LEFT FOR THE INSTITUTE ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES AGO
WAS SHE CATCHING A CAB, DO YOU KNOW? OR THE BUS?
I'M NOT REALLY...
SHE TOLD ME SHE PLANNED TO WALK THERE, DOCTOR.
THANKS, WE'LL KNOW THE ROUTE SHE GENERALLY TAKES...
SO MAYBE I'LL JUST JOIN HER, IF SHE DOESN'T MIND.
OF COURSE, SHE'S GOT QUITE A HEAD START.
BUT THEN, SHE DOESN'T HAVE A CLOAK OF LEVITATION THAT COMES AT HER COMMAND...
WONG'S FIANCEE IS BECOMING NEARLY AS CONCERNED ABOUT MY WELFARE AS HE'S ALWAYS BEEN
WHICH SHOULD PUT US ABOUT EVEN.
AS I ELEVATED MY WAND, OUT OF THE CORNER OF MY EYE I COULD SEE HER WINK.
PRESUMABLY FIGURED I'D BE WANT TO GO INCORPOREAL, AND SLIP AS A WINDOW THAT WAS OPEN, TOO

MARK'S REMARKS

In the previous incarnation of this column, back when I used to churn out three or four of these opinion pieces for the letters pages of the books I edited, I did a column on "Marvel Mysteries," those Big Questions about the Marvel Universe, its denizens, and its history which invited reader speculation for many years before some wiseguy writer decided to lay the mystery to rest. I mentioned some of the great early Marvel mysteries, such as the relationship between **Doctor Doom** and **Rama-Tut**, **Don Blake's** existence prior to finding the hammer of **Thor**, the origin of the enmity between the **Kree** and **Skrull** races, and the secret composition of **Captain America's** shield. Noting that all of these mysteries which cropped up in early 60's Marvels have been answered, I asked if there are any big Marvel mysteries which today's readers are panting to find out about. Thanks to a handful of loyal correspondents, I can now answer that question.

I hereby present to you, courtesy of the sources attributed below, the Outstanding Marvel Mysteries circa 1989, the 28th year of the modern Marvel Universe. In no particular order. . .

1. Who killed the **Scourge** of the Underworld?

—**Ali Kokmen**, no address on letter

2. Who are the **Celestials** and why do they pass judgment on inhabited planets?

3. How did the abstract cosmic beings (**Eternity, Death, Chaos, Order**, etc.) come into being?

4. Why didn't the irradiated spider that bit **Peter Parker** die from radiation long before it had a chance to bite him?

5. Why was **Captain America** put into suspended animation by the Arctic waters instead of freezing to death?

6. Why is humanoid life so common in the universe and most other known dimensions?

7. Where do alternate realities come from? Why does time travel create them?

8. Who are **Wolverine's** parents and how did he become psychotic?

9. How did the Council of **Kangs** come into being?

10. Where did the **Phoenix** Entity come from?

11. What is **Mystique's** connection to **Nightcrawler?**

12. How is it possible for four people to be bombarded with cosmic rays and all four of them receive superhuman powers?

13. How do demons come into being?

14. Why does **Galactus** have so much difficulty finding life-sustaining planets to consume when we have seen that there are so many planets in the Marvel Universe that have life on them?

15. Why was the **Living Pharaoh's** power linked to **Havok's**?

16. What caused a nebula to become the sentient being known as **Cloud**?

17. If the alien **Plodex** (**Marinna's** race) are such efficient conquerors, why do they not have more control over the universe?

18. What is **Northstar's** secret past? **Rogue's**?

19. What is **Wild Child's** connection to Wolverine? How about **Sabretooth's**?

—**Tony Midyett**, Fulton, KY

20. Who created the Ultimate Nullifier?

21. What really happens when you travel backwards, forwards or sideways in time? (We've been given conflicting accounts.)

22. Why is the Earth (and New York City) the focus of so many cosmic events?

—**Allyn Polk**, no address on letter

23. How does a Cosmic Cube alter reality to grant wishes?

24. How many **Elders of the Universe** are there in all? Who are the other ones?

—**Alvie Hitesman**, no address on letter

25. Where did vibranium originate?

26. What is the origin of **Doctor Strange's** cloak of levitation and Amulet of Agomotto?

27. If Adamantium was first publicly revealed to exist in AVENGERS #66, how was Wolverine given Adamantium bones and claws before that?

28. Who are the three "time keepers" spawned at the end of time who imparted their wisdom upon **Immortus** in THOR #282?

29. What caused the time warp in the Bermuda Triangle (as seen in the SKULL THE SLAYER series)?

30. Why is the 12th Century Avalon (shown in AVENGERS #220) apparently not the same place as the Avalon of the Celtic Gods (shown in recent THORs)? Is it truly where the spirit of **King Arthur** now exists?

31. What is the origin of the six soulgems?

32. Why did such an intelligent man as **Reed Richards** develop a spaceship which had inadequate cosmic ray shielding?

33. What is the origin of the enmity between Mystique and **Carol Danvers** (now **Binary**)?

—**Peter Garcia**, Hatillo, Puerto Rico

34. How did Thor and his Asgardian compatriots come to speak Elizabethan English rather than some Scandanavian tongue?

—**Ivan Marshall Briggs**, San Francisco, CA

35. If **Nebula** is the granddaughter of **Thanos**, is her mother or is her father Thanos's offspring?

36. When was the Maria Stark Foundation that funds the **Avengers** set up and how does it work?

—**Jeff Harrod**, South Euclid, OH

37. What makes Earth so special? Why do no other worlds in the Marvel Universe seem to have mutants, gods, sorcerers, superhumans, etc., all together at once like Earth does?

38. What is Galactus's "great destiny," that is, how will he "return to the universe far more than he has taken from it?" In his function as intermediary between Death and Eternity, Galactus has mostly caused death. Will he someday be an even greater bringer of life?

—**Dean Shomshak**, Gig Harbor, WA

39. Who was and whatever happened to **Dragonfly** from X-MEN #104?

—**Russell Steele**, Stillwater, OK

40. Who or what were the **Trikon** from the **Inhumans** series in AMAZING ADVENTURES #9? How did it tie into the Kree-Skrull War?

—**Randall Moreau**, Neenah, WI

Had enough? Why, there's so much plot material in these Top 40 questions that you can just bet that all of Marvel's most conscientious writers have torn this page out of this mag and tacked it above their typewriter or word processor!

Excised from the list above were all "Where are they now?" questions, questions that have already been answered somewhere although the letter writer was not aware of it, and trivial questions from disjointed or abruptly-ended storylines (yes, there have been some in the past 28 years). It should be noted, as **Allyn Polk** pointed out, that great stories (if not great mysteries) can come out of annoying trivial questions. I'd also like to thank **Victor Martinez, Doug Clark, Edwin Hastings, Keith Walter, Daniel Carter, Tilman Stieve,** and **Jay Gardner,** who submitted some of the same questions as on the above list.

As the 40 questions above indicate, there still is a lot of mystery in the ol' Marvel Universe, and I for one, can't wait to see some of these mysteries unraveled.

—*Mark Gruenwald*

Mark Gruenwald is Marvel's Executive Editor. This is his 100th Mark's Remarks column.

MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

A few months back, we presented a "strange" trivia quiz covering all the characters who had ever headlined STRANGE TALES. And so, **Dr. Strange**, Master of the Mystic Arts that he is, was forced to share the spotlight yet again, just as he has done so often through his long history. But wait! Just as the Doc has been awarded his own solo book again, so do we accord him the honor of his own solo trivia quiz — can MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE bestow any higher tribute? Peer into your Orb of Agamotto and see if you can divine the answers to these twenty teasers — but if your Orb is clouded, there's always the answer box on page 32!

— Brian Nelson

1. Which has NOT been one of Doctor Strange's mystic tools?
   A) The Eye of Agamotto
   B) The Fangs of Farallah
   C) The Wings of Needless Sorrow
   D) The Arms of Ashtoreth

2. **Dormammu** re-entered our sphere of existence recently by:
   A) possessing **Wong's** fiancee
   B) hiding behind Doc's eyepatch
   C) a spatial fissure created by the **Darkhold**
   D) the Lincoln Tunnel

3. And once Dormammu was here, Doctor Strange drove him away with the help of all of the following friends EXCEPT:
   A) **Gaea**
   B) **Clea**
   C) **Andromeda**
   D) **Topaz**

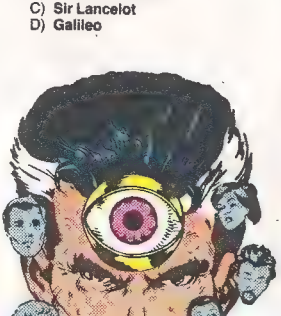
4. What young mystic of the Amazon had the chance to live a life that would have mirrored Stephen Strange's?
   A) **Eagle**
   B) **Jaguar**
   C) **Owl**
   D) **Heffalump**

5. Doctor Strange's house, with Wong and **Sarah** inside, was literally stolen from this plane of reality by:
   A) **Umar**
   B) **Urthona**
   C) **Shazanna**
   D) **Phil Rizzuto** at the Money Store

6. Which of Doc's allies returned to Topaz her stolen soul?
   A) **Rintrah**
   B) **Victoria Bentley**
   C) **Hamir the Hermit**
   D) **Enitharmon the Weaver**

7. Which of the following vampires survived Doctor Strange's successful destruction of all vampires?
   A) **Dracula**
   B) **Lilith**
   C) **Hannibal King**
   D) **Harold H. Harold**

8. Stephen Strange has met all of the following in time travel EXCEPT:
   A) **Sgt. Fury**
   B) **Sir Francis Bacon**
   C) **Sir Lancelot**
   D) **Galileo**



9. Which intimate of Stephen Strange first met him in the mundane setting of a bank?
   A) **Morgana Blessing**
   B) Sara Wolfe
   C) **James Mandarin**
   D) **Sligguth**

10. For a brief period of time, what mystic symbol appeared on Doc's forehead during times of extreme peril?
   A) an ankh
   B) a pentagram
   C) the infinity symbol
   D) the mathematical symbol for Pi

11. In his first annual, what rarely seen foe did Doc encounter?
   A) **Lectra** of Phaseworld
   B) **Styggia** of Wormworld
   C) **Raissa** of Throneworld
   D) **Yul Brynner** of Westworld

12. Dr. Strange battled the **Defenders** themselves under what identity?
   A) The **Presence**
   B) The **Crimson Cowl**
   C) The **Red Rajah**
   D) **Roger Stern**

13. Which of Doc's foes was a living star in human form?
   A) **Stygyro**
   B) **Dream Weaver**
   C) The **Dweller in Darkness**
   D) **Dolly Parton**

14. Which Doctor Strange foe may just have been responsible for the Creation, in an issue that the Overstreet Price Guide describes with the phrase, "Intro: God"?
   A) **Baron Mordo**
   B) **Cagliostro**
   C) **Sise-Neg**
   D) **Jimmy Swaggart**

15. Our favorite sorcerer supreme defeated the other worldly **Shuma-Gorath** by:
   A) destroying the id of the aged **Genghis**
   B) obliterating the ego of **the Ancient One**
   C) eradicating the super ego of **Lord Phyffe**
   D) finding a really good therapist

16. In the last issue of Doc's first series, he discovered the menace of:
   A) **Cyrus Black**
   B) the **Undying Ones**
   C) the **Sons of Satannish**
   D) the **Daughters of the American Revolution**

17. Doc teamed with the **Black Knight** and the Avengers to topple the twin menaces of:
   A) Dormammu and **Nightmare**
   B) **Yandroth** and **Voltarr**
   C) **Surtur** and **Ymir**
   D) **Starsky** and **Hutch**

18. What night did Nightmare choose to capture **Eternity**?
   A) New Year's Eve
   B) Halloween
   C) Midsummer's Eve
   D) the Night of 100 Network Stars

19. And in one of their earliest jousts, Doctor Strange defeated Nightmare by employing the villain's never-sleeping mortal enemy in the Netherworld:
   A) **the G'uaranthic Guardian**
   B) **the Gulgol**
   C) **the Inbetweener**
   D) **Morton Downey Jr.**

20. Clea first met Dr. Strange:
   A) as a prisoner of Dormammu
   B) as a vision in the Orb of Agamotto
   C) in the Ancient One's Tibetan retreat
   D) at a frat party tossed by the hoary hosts of **Hoggoth**

THE MARVEL® AGE OF COMICS: 1979 PART I

You've got to admit there's something special about anthology titles like MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS! They give the cult heroes of the past a new chance to shine, to visit, to restore old memories and create new memories for the future! Here on this page, though, we're concerned with the past—so let's look at what some of Marvel's cult heroes were engaged in back in 1979!

MAN-THING, whose new serial just concluded in MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS, received his own title—for the second time!—in the last moments of 1979. And his opening exploit had distinct resonances with his most recent story, as the military tried to seize control of the muck-monster and make him their own weapon! But their efforts failed when they discovered, like so many before them, that whoever knows fear—burns at the **Man-Thing**'s touch!

One current MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS star, on the other hand, was concluding his series run in 1979. In the concluding issues of BLACK PANTHER, the **Ed Hannigan** and **Jerry Bingham** team wrapped up **Jack Kirby**'s tale of **Kiber the Cruel**. The hidden mastermind was at last revealed in shocking fashion: failed teleportation experiments had merged Kiber with the floor of his own laboratory! (Don't try this at home!) A two-parter featuring Klaw wrapped up **T'Challa**'s book, with guest star appearances from the **Avengers**!

The African Avenger was back before year's end, though, headlining in MARVEL PREMIERE. "The Killing of Windeagle" resolved plotlines from the Panther's JUNGLE ACTION stories that had pitted him against the KKK. Also finishing up earlier adventures in MARVEL PREMIERE was the **Man-Wolf**, in a sword-and-space-fantasy epic as the Stargod of the Other Realm! **Scott Land**, the new **Ant-Man**, debuted in a two-part thriller, and the **Falcon** enjoyed a solo flight as well. And among the strangest stories of the year was PREMIERE's 50th issue, starring real-life, bizarre rock-and-roller **Alice Cooper**!

Bizarre was a keynote for WHAT IF—? in 1979—as the tales of alternate realities narrated by the **Watcher** crossed boundaries of time, space, and even right and wrong? First we asked "What if. . .**Conan** walked the Earth today?"—and saw him in combat with **Captain America**, and meeting a redhead named **Danette**, who might just have gone on to script a few comics of her own! Then, "What if. . .**Sgt. Fury** fought World War II in space?" The answer: He'd still win! "What if. . .**Nova** had been four other people?" We saw in four vignettes that only **Richard Rider** could have made a success of the power of the human rocket. And in a startling display of thematic continuity, we asked "What if. . .Master of Kung Fu had fought for **Fu Manchu**?" "What if. . .**Ghost Rider**, **Spider-Woman**, and **Captain Marvel** had been villains?" And "What if. . .**Dr. Strange** were a disciple of **Dormammu**?" These alarming studies of the dark side of power made WHAT IF—? one of the most provocative books around.

Speaking of those aforementioned heroes. . .CAPTAIN MARVEL fought a virtual war in 1979, teaming up with **Drax** against the enemy forces of the supercomputer, **Isaac**. Isaac was fulfilling the legacy of **Thanos** by turning Titan into a battleground and making similar plans for Earth and all of the cosmos! Isaac's pawns included **Eysius**, who later became **Mar-Vell**'s truest love; the unearthly **Chaos**; and the warlord, **Stellarax**. **Rick Jones** and his girlfriend **Gertie** helped the Kree Captain stymie Stellarax's attempted invasion of our world in Mar-Vell's last issue.

But the adventures continued as Captain Marvel starred in the rejuvenated MARVEL SPOTLIGHT! The final battle

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SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE MIGHTY AVENGERS T'CHALLA MUST FACE THE POWER OF... KLAW!

MARVEL COMICS PRICE GUIDE

There's a new administration in Washington, interest rates may be going up, stock prices are uncertain, the rate of inflation is fluctuating. In a world like this, isn't it nice to have **Robert Overstreet's** THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE #18? Here, at a glance, are prices for the back issue comics we've reviewed this month—so you'll know what you can expect to pay at your local comics specialty shop! But remember: this is only a guide. Actual prices may vary, and should be lower for copies in fair or poor condition.

	CONDITION		
	Good	Fine	Mint
■ **BLACK PANTHER**			
13-15		.25	.50
■ **CAPTAIN MARVEL**			
60-62		.30	.60
■ **GHOST RIDER**			
34-39		.60	1.20
■ **MAN-THING** (Vol 2)			
1		.40	.80
■ **MARVEL PREMIERE**			
46-51 (47-48: **Ant-Man**, 51: **Panther**)		.40	.80
■ **MARVEL SPOTLIGHT** (Vol 2)			
1-3 (**Capt. Marvel**)		.30	.60
■ **MASTER OF KUNG FU**			
72-83		.30	.60
■ **MS. MARVEL**			
22-23		.25	.50
■ **NOVA**			
23-25		.25	50
■ **WHAT IF. . .?**			
13 (**Conan**)	70	2.00	4.00
14-18	.30	.90	1.80

against **Isaac** and his assembled forces took two more issues to tell, at which point **Eon** appeared to help Captain Marvel rededicate himself in his mission to protect Earth from all threats. All these space sagas had been crafted by the team of writer **Dough Moench** and artist **Pat Broderick**, assuring forever their places in the Captain Marvel canon.

Two more heroes whose titles ended in 1979 were MS. MARVEL and NOVA. **Carol Danvers** (whose persona still pops up from time to time in the body of the **X-Men's Rogue**) was fired by **J. Jonah Jameson**—we should all be so lucky—and dueled her arch-enemy, **Deathbird**. In a last-issue stunner she battled her best friend, astronaut **Selia Petrie**, who'd been possessed by an alien force that **Ms. Marvel** needed the aid of the **Guardians of the Galaxy** to defeat!

Nova had his own archfoe to deal with: the sinister **Sphinx**! **Dr. Sun** and the Sphinx were both after the secrets of the universe locked inside Nova's mind, and Nova needed the help of his allies—the **Comet**, **Crimebuster**, and **Diamondhead**—to resist their nefarious ploys! But even that wouldn't be enough—with the cancellation of NOVA, the struggle would be continued in the pages of FANTASTIC FOUR!

While these heroes met their ends, though, holding forth in fine fettle (and you know how painful that can be) were GHOST RIDER and MASTER OF KUNG FU. Scripter **Michael Fleisher** wove the tales of the demon-biker possessing **Johnny Blaze**—introducing him to the **Boy Who Lived Forever**, demons dwelling in Denver, and sinister squads of death-cultists. A long-promised highlight of the year was writer/artist **Jim Starlin's** guest story, running the Ghost Rider in a motorcycle race against **Death** itself! (Who else would you expect from Jim Starlin—the **Popples**?)

The Doug Moench and **Mike Zeck** team held MASTER OF KUNG FU on steady course, bringing **Shockwave** back for a rematch against **Shang-Chi**. The two found themselves unlikely allies when they returned to **Mordillo's** island, to grapple with the lethal animatronics of the cute killer robot, **Brynocki**. The machinations of espionage led to more trouble for Shang and company—MI-6 mainstay **Sarsfield Ward** turned against **Sir Denis** and **Clive Reston**, and **Fah Lo Suee**, Shang's sister, schemed on her own, using as her pawn **Zaran, the Weapons Master**. The power of the **Illuminati**, **the Warriors of the Golden Dawn**—what dreadful secrets did they hold? Behind it all, was the specter of Fu Manchu lurking?

The answers would come in 1980—but we've only just started to explore the wonderment of 1979! Join us next month as Earth witnesses the arrivals of the **Micronauts**, **Rom**, and **Godzilla's** last stand! Excelsior!

—Brian Nelson

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY different

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,
c/o Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc., 387 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016

Attention correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will withhold that info on request!

When we saw this month's letter column title (sent to us by Sean Guiney of Birmingham, England, no less), we simply couldn't resist it. Not only does it pay homage to *Monty Python's Flying Circus*—one of our favorite TV shows of all time—but it also describes our philosophy of letter column titles brilliantly! Because that's just what we keep looking for—a completely different title to head up this column every single month. So if you've got an idea for a title that you think is pretty darn spiffy, well, send it on in! If we use it, we'll even print your name in this space to say "thanks."

And as for you, Sean, our hats are off to you. A title which sums up our approach so neatly and cleanly must have taken years of constant meditation and thought. So with this hurdle passed, we'll leave you to the next step on your journey to self-enlightenment.

Meet you at the mall, okay?

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I am a big fan of the AVENGERS, especially the BLACK KNIGHT. Could you answer a few questions for me.

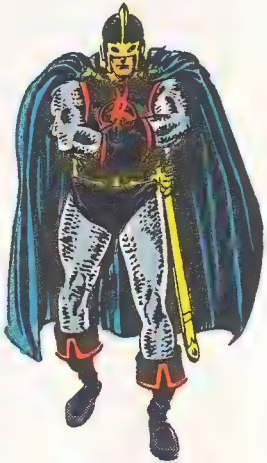
Who created the **Black Knight**? When was his first appearance? And are there any plans for a BLACK KNIGHT Limited Series? I would really enjoy one. Please consider it.

To everyone at Marvel, keep up the good work! Make Mine Marvel!

Emery Pal
3773 W. 133 St.
Cleveland, OH 44111

Well, before we can answer your questions, Emery, we have to be sure we know *which* Black Knight you're talking about! Would you believe that there have actually been *three* over the years? The first was Sir Percy of Scandia, who seemed to be the meekest member of King Arthur's court until he picked up his armor and enchanted sword. The second was a villainous scientist named Nathan Garrett, who donned his armor to battle Iron Man and the Avengers astride a winged horse. And after Dr. Garrett died, Sir Percy's ghost appeared to Garrett's nephew, Dane Whitman, and Dane became the Black Knight we know and love today!

The current Black Knight debuted in THE AVENGERS #48, the creation of writer Roy Thomas and artist John Buscema. We agree with you that a BLACK KNIGHT Limited Series would be awfully nifty, but unfortunately, there aren't any plans for one right now. However, there have been murmurings around here about some dire happenings in an upcoming issue of SOLO AVENGERS. And considering that Dane was a raging berserker the last time we saw him, it's anybody's guess what'll happen next!



Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

Has there ever been a comic book with a bad guy as its star? If not, why not?

(Unsigned)

There certainly have, Unsigned! To name just a couple of examples, the diabolical Doctor Doom starred in the first eight issues of ASTONISHING TALES back in the Sixties, and the Seventies saw the birth of SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP, featuring the likes of the Red Skull, the Sub-Mariner, Magneto, and once again, ol' Doc Doom. And that's not to mention special events such as the SUPER-VILLAIN CLASSICS one-shot starring Galactus or MARVEL SUPER-HEROES #20, featuring (you guessed it) Doctor Doom.

Gee, after all those starring roles, you'd think Doom would miss being in the limelight. In fact. . .

Oh, wait a minute! You don't suppose the *reason* this letter was unsigned was. . .Doom? Is that you?

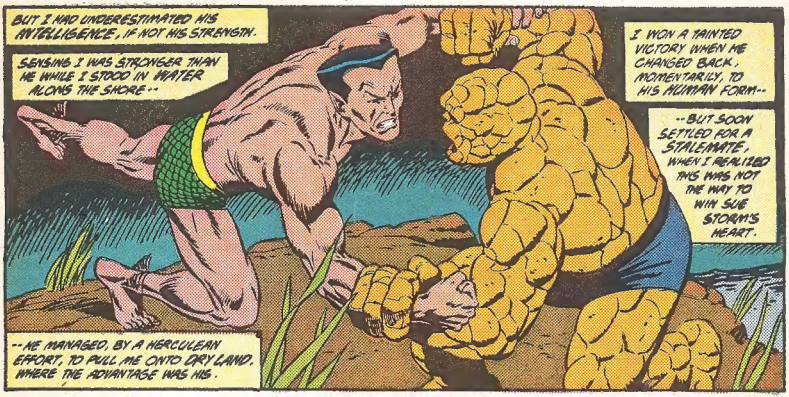
Sheesh. Some evil genius dictators *never* grow up.

Dear Marvel,

Y'know, if I had a dollar for every time I've read "I'm the best there is at what I do and what I do isn't very nice. . .," well, I just like dreamin' about it. That phrase deserves a spot in Bartlett's Quotations.

Travis Smith
33 Springfield Dr.
Branford, Ontario
Canada
N3R 1N4

Travis, Travis, you don't realize what you're asking. First, it's supervillains with their own series. Then it's guys with claws getting included


BUT I HAD UNDERESTIMATED HIS INTELLIGENCE, IF NOT HIS STRENGTH.
SENSING I WAS STRONGER THAN HE WHILE I STOOD IN WATER ALONG THE SHORE--
I WON A TAINTED VICTORY WHEN ME CHANGED BACK, MOMENTARILY, TO HIS HUMAN FORM--
--BUT SOON SETTLED FOR A STALEMATE, WHEN I REALIZED THIS WAS NOT THE WAY TO WIN SUE STORM'S HEART.
--HE MANAGED, BY A HERCULEAN EFFORT, TO PULL ME ONTO DRY LAND. WHERE THE ADVANTAGE WAS HIS.

in Bartlett's. The next thing you know, somebody'll write in asking for a regular PUNISHER series!

Hmmm? We're already doing a regular PUNISHER series? Two of them, in fact?

Oh. Never mind.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I have one question: Whatever happened to Jack Kirby? I was little when Jack was doing a lot of his Marvel art, so I bought some back issues of CAPTAIN AMERICA with his artwork, but it seems that he faded away from Marvel in the late Seventies. I know he did a little artwork for DC in the early Eighties, but I haven't seen his art since.

Chris Kareakos
6908 Blaisdell Ave. So.
Richfield, MN 55423

We're sorry to say, Chris, that Jack isn't doing any work for Marvel right now. But he is hard at work on a novel. Considering that Jack co-created the Fantastic Four, the Hulk, Iron Man, the original X-Men, Thor, the Avengers, Captain America, and dozens of other characters for Marvel, DC, and other companies, we're sure that it'll be exciting. Meanwhile, have you seen his JACK KIRBY'S HEROES AND VILLAINS sketchbook? It's a beautiful hardcover book that contains illustrations of his most famous and, in a bit of fun, some of his most obscure, creations. Pure Imagination Publishing at 88 Lexington Avenue, Suite 9-C, New York, NY 10016 published it and they tell us that there are still a few of the signed and numbered copies available at $60 postpaid.

But in the meantime, you can find some of Jack's early Marvel work reprinted in our hardcover MARVEL MASTERWORKS books. At this point, we've published two volumes apiece of THE FANTASTIC FOUR and THE X-MEN, drawn by Jack and scripted by Stan Lee, and one volume of THE AVENGERS, by the same team. These stories not only shaped the F.F., X-Men, and Avengers, but the whole Marvel Age of Comics as well!

Hey, there's that eye-catching yellow (or "yaller," as we Ozark types say) background again! And you know what that means. . .No, not that Iron Man's wearing one of his old suits of armor again: it means it's time for our LETTER OF THE MONTH! As you know, each month, we search far and wide for that one letter (or sometimes even two letters) that we think will be of particular interest to the far-reaching ranks of Marveldom. Then, we print it here against a (all together now) sporty yellow background.

This time around, our Letter of the Month concerns a clever idea from "across the pond. . ."

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I must tell you that your American libraries which stock comic books (see Newswatch in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #70) are way behind the times. Here at Harrow, the leading public school in England, there has been a library stocking comics for two and a half years now. Not only has it been stocking comics for so long, but it stocks comics exclusively, owning several thousand pounds worth. We unfortunately are not funded by the school and so, we have to raise our money through private subscriptions. We have at present around sixty members, each paying $22 in three installments, one per term.

Your marketing department might fear that Marvel would lose to such a cooperative venture. However, the reverse is true. Virtually all of the members would have spent hardly any money on comics before they were persuaded to join, so the amount of money spent at Harrow School has increased dramatically. Hopefully, this increase in your profits will help you make even better comics for us and all your other readers.

I would like to hope that there may be other such organizations both in England and over in America. If there are, I would be very interested in getting in touch with them, either just to swap information on a one-to-one basis, or perhaps even to start up a federation of comics libraries.

Edmund Corgin Thompson
Founder, the Harrow
Comics Association
The Knoll
Harrow School
Harrow on the Hills
Middlesex HA1 3E2
England

Sounds like a great concept for an organization, Edmund! We hope your letter gives a few other people out there the same idea.

Dear Marvel,

More questions from another lousy Marvel Z. . .Z. . .No, I can't quite say it.

1.) Are there any more Mutant Supercrossovers planned? If so, do you think you could hold the next one during the Summer? I hate it when you hype and hype for months and I

realize that school starts before I get to read the biggest event of the year in the X-books.

2.) Can you tell me the names of any Marvel regulars who live in the San Francisco Bay Area? If their identities are hidden to protect their families and loved ones, I understand.

3.) Could you have a Groo vs. Hulk vs. Wolverine special? These are three of my favorite characters, and it would be great to see the Best There Is at What He Does meet the One who Does What He Does Best meet Grrr. . .

4.) Do you really read every single letter you get, or is that just to make us more careful about what we put in them? (Marvel is the devil! Marvel is the de—mmph!)

5.) Just checking.

6.) Any way I can get my hands on a copy of Peter David's KNIGHTLIFE through you guys? It seems to have disappeared from the shelves of the local bookstores.

7.) Is Frank Miller working on anything at the moment?

DM
2311 Corona Ct.
Berkeley, CA 94708

Lots of questions there, DM. Taking them in order:

1.) No, none is planned just yet. But when you consider that they just got through Inferno, don't you think our hard-working mutants deserve a break?

2.) Well, let's see. . .There's Jessica Drew, the original Spider-Woman. . .

Oh, you meant Marvel creators? Sorry, DM, but we can't give out the addresses of the folks who work for us; they deserve *some* privacy, after all. Still, we will say that lots of writers and artists live throughout California. Just off the top of our head, there's SILVER SURFER writer Steve Englehart, Trina Robbins (who wrote and drew MISTY a while back), Steve Leialoha (who's drawn everything from DOCTOR STRANGE to COYOTE), LONGSHOT'S Arthur Adams, SUB-MARINER scripters Roy and Dann Thomas, and too many others to mention.

Guess we're just a bunch of bi-coastal kinda guys, huh?

3.) How about a Wolverine and Alf team-up in ALF SPRING SPECIAL #1? Be with us next month and get all the details in our Mutant Report!

4.) Sure do! Even though we can't print or reply to them all, we really do read every single one. That's why we get so little sleep.

5.) No problem. Hope that leg's healing up nicely.

6.) Sorry, but we have nothing to do with the book, other than thinking Peter's a nice guy. The best we can suggest is that you ask your local book store owner to order some more copies from Ace Books.

7.) Yup. Even now, Frank is hard at work on the long-awaited ELEKTRA Graphic Novel. No publication date has been set yet, but we'll let you know as soon as one has. Deal?

Well, that about does it for yet another month, which leaves only 121 more until (according to the psychic Criswell) we reach the end of the world. So if you've been putting off writing a letter, better do it fast! Of course, Criswell might've been wrong, but why take chances?

And while you're writing that letter, why not also drop a line to one or two of our MARVEL CORRESPONDENTS? You know, those friendly folks from around the world who are looking for new pals with whom to trade pulse-pounding palaver and polysyllabic pontification? Give it a shot—it's quick, easy, and cheaper than a weekend for two in the Bahamas!

MARVEL® CORRESPONDENTS

If you'd like to be listed in this space yourself, send your name, address, age, and the titles of your three favorite Marvel series to Marvel Correspondents at the address high atop this letter column.

All set? Then let's meet this month's Marvel Correspondents!

Darrel Day
Rt. 3 Box 261
Hawthorne, FL 32640
Age: 15
Favorites: X-MEN, D.P.7, IRON MAN

Franklin R. de la Cruz
Suite 306 Rosario Apts.
Araneta Ave.
Quezon City 1104
PHILLIPPINES
Age: 19
Favorites: X-MEN, POWER PACK, STRIKEFORCE: MORITURI

Noel Gourvennec
21 Rue des Charbonniers
91370 Verrieres
FRANCE
Age: 19
Favorites: DAREDEVIL, EXCALIBUR, GROO

Brad Toberman
1212 S. Grant
Janesville, WI 53546
Age: 16
Favorites: SILVER SURFER, X-FACTOR, G.I. JOE

Alan Turner
795 Rabbit Trail
Edgefield, SC 29824
Age: 18
Favorites: X-MEN, X-FACTOR, EXCALIBUR

Steven C. Perez
105 E. Laurel
McAllen, TX 78501
Age: 16
Favorites: CAPTAIN AMERICA, DAREDEVIL, X-MEN

Craig Fraser
23 Riversdale Road
Upper Hutt
NEW ZEALAND
Age: 19
Favorites: X-MEN, NEW MUTANTS, MARSHAL LAW

Keith Antul
25 Dixfield Rd.
Worcester, MA 01606
Age: 12
Favorites: ALPHA FLIGHT, X-FACTOR, GROO

Garry Zacheiss
30 New York Ave.
Bergenfield, NJ 07621
Age: 9
Favorites: D.P.7, PSI-FORCE, EXCALIBUR

Jason Lee
4028 E. Pike's Peak
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
Age: 15
Favorites: CAPTAIN AMERICA, G.I. JOE, THE PUNISHER

ANSWERS TO MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

1. D	6. A	11. C	16. B
2. B	7. C	12. C	17. C
3. C	8. D	13. A	18. A
4. C	9. A	14. C	19. B
5. B	10. A	15. B	20. A

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

THE WAR™

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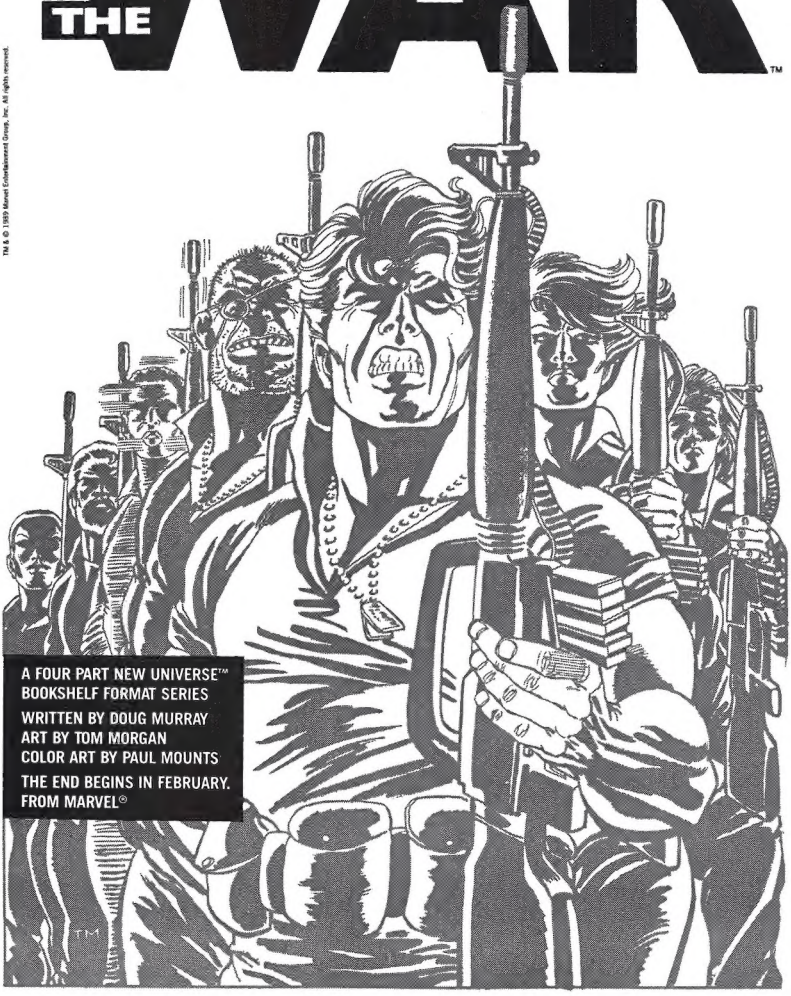

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